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THE  
SYSTEMATIC, OR IMAGINARY,

PHILOSOPHER:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

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“ Les plus prudens se laissent captiver,  
“ Et le vrai sage est encore à trouver.  
“ Craignez surtout le titre ridicule  
“ De philosophe.”

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JORDAN HOOKHAM,  
BOOKSELLER, &c. TO THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCE OF WALES,  
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1800.

## PREFACE.

LAST year, the author was induced, by a profusion of foreign dramas, and the indignation several sensible and judicious persons expressed, on that subject, to suppose it might be a favourable moment to offer something which should, at least, be more original, than plays altered from the German, though inferior to the united powers of a Kotzebue, and a Sheridan. — Thus influenced, THE SYSTEMATIC PHILOSOPHER was finished, the author's first, and only, attempt, at dramatic composition; and, whether he shall ever again intrude himself on the public, (he, *now*, does so, not without much hesitation,) the approbation and temper of the public, and various circumstances, must determine. Should the present comedy ever go into a Committee, in the Green Room, many alterations might be suggested, and adopted; evidently, some curtailment would be requisite, and, perhaps, it would be necessary to have it re-committed,

committed, and amended, or even repealed, within the session.

Without ridiculously affecting peculiarity, the liberty of mingling verse with prose has been claimed; yet, this deviation from the modern mode may, probably, meet, and, possibly, merit, some censure, which, at present, seems far beyond the surface of a common understanding.

That the plot (if plot it is) was not intended to be very deep, or intricate, will, easily, be discovered; and, in regard to the unities, once so much insisted on, that the author has not been, entirely, regulated by a rigid adherence to the law, will be no less obvious. He has availed himself of the latitude which seems, now, to be almost universally admitted, not only of prolonging the time, but of varying the place of action, and of representing, in succession, fictitious events, which, in the common course of experience, are, universally, known to create, in reality, much delay, and which, previous to their execution, demand consultations and reconsultations, with self, and others. Thus, to make a man hostile to matrimony, in one act; enamoured, in the next; and, a Benedick, in the third, if examined by the test of truth (however mutable,) may be easily ridiculed—but, a trip to the altar,

at

at the theatre, will scarcely allow time to send from Drury Lane to Doctors' Commons, to obtain a licence. An audience, must bid adieu to the Buskin, and the Sock, or numberless common-place deceptions, with voluntary blindness, must be submitted to; such as speaking, aside, what—every body may hear; and other stage tricks, without which, authors and actors would be eternally embarrassed, though the public would not be more completely gratified, than by the present prevailing delusions; and, fortunate might it be, if the side speeches, and various artifices, practised to support the deceptions on that grand, and all-interesting theatre, the world, could be carried on with equal innocence, and equal economy.

If any reader, however self-confident, on a further acquaintance with our philosopher, should censure the attempt to satirize the little real strength displayed by those who *seem* so firm in their opinions, let him but consider the numberless revolutions his own mind has sustained; how little he can govern events, but how much events govern him; how often they have marred his resolutions, and moulded his will; let him but coolly reflect, and it is not impossible that, in some way, *mutato nomine*, the fable may, innocently, apply to himself.

So fully convinced is the author, that great moral, mingled even with political, truths, might be strongly, agreeably, and efficaciously inculcated, on the stage, by a man *really* superior to all party and personal considerations, if gifted with the combined powers of sense and satire, that he hopes some writer, of superior abilities, will be induced to exert himself, at the present crisis, when so many raw and ruinous materials seem to remain unemployed, and which, if ably and artfully put together, would serve for the construction of a drama that might, at once, please the ear, secure the heart, and, by its general tendency and appropriate application, invigorate the best principles which can support rational liberty, sound ethics, and polished society; though, before he aims at instructing, by pleasing, perhaps, it may be necessary to ask, if, at this moment, he is likely to please by instructing? Yet, surely, every effort ought to be made; zeal should never be abated; hope, never abandoned.

However, few people can be ignorant of the many circumstances which must, yet seldom can, combine, to procure success to a piece, equal to that of a Pizarro, where a Manager has genius, dresses, decorations, music, admirable actors, a personal interest, and a popular name, to ensure a favourable reception to his labours.

In

In the present instance, should approbation follow a private perusal, it may not be less gratifying than any applause, which might accompany a public performance. Though the printing of a play does not lead to the profits of a nine nights wonder; (and, whether it shall please, *decies repetita*, though the fame of a bard may be, his finances are not, materially, affected, and in spite of

“*Gessit enim nummum in loculos demittere; post hoc Securus, cadat an recto stet fabula talo;*”) and in

yet, by the aid of the press, an author, probably, screens his production from the sad and solemn ceremony of condemnation, on the stage; as, by a previous consultation, the public pulse may be supposed to beat, in some degree, in unison with his own hopes.

If any apology is requisite for that species of wit and humour, attempted by *Sirloin*, to display which, frequent resort is had to punning, and playing on words, it is to be presumed a remark may, here, be permitted—that the finest Attic salt is not to be sought for, in the kitchen; but such salt as the kitchen may be supposed to afford.

An epilogue, has been added; and, should a prologue be wanted, to introduce THE SYSTEM-ATIC PHILOSOPHER on the boards, an endeavour shall be made to supply one; but, first, the play itself,



# PREFACE.

itself, should be revised, and some emendations proposed.

Perhaps, there is no adage more generally applicable, in many of the common concerns of life, yet so seldom, wisely or willingly, applied, as the just and judicial one, "that no man ought to be a judge in his own cause."—That the irritable race of authors, are, sometimes, the least competent, of any, to decide, for themselves, will not, probably, be disputed. He who aims at the acquirement of fame, will, often, only provoke censure; and this, surely, should be deeply and durably impressed on the heart, as a kind of saving clause, and consolation, to disappointed self-importance. Of that truth, the present author is perfectly sensible; and too much of vanity hath he seen, not to be duly disgusted with its incessant seduction, and powerful and vexatious operation; too much of self-assurance, not to smile at its frequent folly, and frequent failure; therefore, in what rank, as a dramatic performance, the following is entitled to be placed; whether best calculated to be perused in the closet, or performed at the theatre; (perhaps, if left, precisely, in its present shape, the decision might be in favour of the former;) how justly it may aspire to the title of an original or legitimate drama; in what scenes it may require a clipper, coiner, or adapter; what has

# PREFACE.

been attempted; and what achieved; whether the dialogue is rich, or penurious; natural, or stiff; careless, or correct; in what spirit the characters may have been conceived, and with what propriety preserved: all these, and many more questions, let it be the province of an accurate and impartial reader to answer.

That his pretensions might be fairly, fully, and disinterestedly examined, as no other practicable mode occurred to him, the author has ventured to empannel the Public, as a grand jury; yet, presumptuous indeed must he be to challenge any of his jurors, much less to give a charge to them, when they retire, within their own chamber, to consider his case. What the *Foreman* (the Reviewer will forgive the appellation) shall report, may be of considerable importance. However, after a patient, though, sometimes, painful, investigation, innocence rarely suffers severely, either in our courts of law, equity, or criticism; and as, in spite of the most ingenious, powerful, and pathetic address, justice will, and ought to have, its course, the author, who has, thus, appealed to the verdict of the Public, is prepared, respectfully and implicitly, to abide by that verdict.

He conceives not that he has a right to any thing more than to be arraigned and tried, in open court, by his country and his peers, except the usual consolation, until judgment shall be pronounced.—The hopes of a good deliverance.

March 30th, 1800.

POST.

## POSTSCRIPT.

A FEW typographical errors, will occur.—In page 9, with *variations*, should have been, with *accompaniments*.—Page 28, *stade*, *staid*.—Page 49, *Guilotine*, *Guillotine*.—Page 53, *set to music*, omitted.—Page 63, *no man*, *no person*.—Page 68, line the 1st, *you*, ought to have been left out.—*Day*, *Protestant*, and a few words besides, are, improperly, printed with capital letters. The punctuation, is not, always, as complete as could be wished; not even as the author could make it. But, as such imperfections, with ease, may be corrected by a judicious, and, by a candid, reader, will not be attributed to ignorance, nothing further shall be said on that subject. Let it yield to one, which, at this moment, is, and ever will be, much more interesting to his feelings. That a man, not unfrequently, is a *bad judge in his own cause*, has been verified, even within the last twenty-four hours; for, since the press has been broken up, a valuable female friend has suggested that there are expressions in the “*Systematic Philosopher*,” which, possibly, *might* be misconstrued into levity, to the disadvantage of the author; who, thus, solemnly, declares, that, as nothing has been further from his intentions, nothing is more remote from his wishes.

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## DEDICATION.

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I, CERTAINLY, know many high and honourable characters; to whom, with real respect, I might offer the following Play: but I would sedulously avoid the imputation of adulatory incense, kindled, rather, for benefits expected, than benefits received.

Where was my first duty; where my finest feelings were; there shall be my first dedication. Though the mortal parts of those parents, who had the earliest claim to my earliest affections, are mouldering in the grave, the *immortal*, at the moment my heart dictates these lines, *may* be conscious of this poor, but public, proof, of my gratitude, for numberless obligations; obligations, which no man should be ashamed to avow, because no man should be ashamed to feel; which never can be forgotten; and which—now—never, can be repaid.

To

## DEDICATION.

xv

To them, then; to their memory; and their manes; and to those, so long and so fondly united to them, by ties of love and consanguinity, who have followed, or are following, their shades to the tomb: To the quick, too, their descendants, as well as to the dead, I dedicate this little work; anxiously including, as not less valuable, though more recently acquired, those friends, gained by a connexion, which, in this world, ultimately decides the happiness of so many individuals.

THE AUTHOR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sir SOBER SYSTEM (the Systematic Philosopher).  
Major COUNTERGUARD (his Friend).  
ALLWORTHY (Father to Eliza).  
Signor Don SANCHEZ, ALPHONSE, REMIRE, FRANCISQUE,  
Don MATADOR.  
RAGOT (French Valet to Sir Sober System).  
CRAFT (an Innkeeper).  
CHATTER (a Windsor Chair-maker).  
GRAFT (Gardener; at the Inn).

WOMEN.

ELIZA ALLWORTHY.  
CHARLOTTE (her Friend, and Sister to Sir Sober System).  
Mrs. ARCH GOSSIP (Maid to Eliza Allworthy).  
SIRLOIN (Cook to Sir Sober System).  
BET, O'BOTHERUM O'BALDERDASH (an Irish Beggar-  
woman).

Osler, Waiters, Servants, &c.

SCENE—First at GREENWOOD PARK, Sir Sober System's  
Seat in the Country; then, at an Inn, on the Road;  
afterwards, again at GREENWOOD, and, ultimately, in  
London.

THE

SYSTEMATIC, OR IMAGINARY,  
PHILOSOPHER.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Room at Greenwood. Major COUNTERGUARD and  
RAGOT.

Major Counterguard.

SO, your master is strolling in the woods!—Why,  
with his starving system, he looks, already, like  
Duns Scotus, in his last page and last pang.

Rag. Ah! by gar! if this is living like a phi-  
losopher, let Ragot live like a footman.

Major C. And I would rather mess with Doctor  
Sangrado himself. But, not being a philosopher,  
I want my dinner most devoutly.

Rag. Ah! Mrs. Sirloin, our surly cook, is in  
one great hurry to send it in.—Mon Dieu! what  
a *sauvage* that *grande* woman is!

Major C. To be sure, a more curious or cum-  
brous mass of moving matter, never have I beheld:

B

she



she is a compound of every thing that is odd, or ugly; she has the expression of a Saracen, the temper of a termagant, and the tongue of a fishwoman. By all that's grim and ghastly, you might search from the Piazzas, in Covent Garden, to the Pillars of Hercules, or from the great wall of China, to the coast of Patagonia, or river Amazon, and find not a more fantastic piece of solidity. With the eyes of a ferret, she looks as if she was just arrived, express, from the "Promontory of Noses." She has the proboscis of an elephant, with the manners of a half-humanized Hottentot.—(Ragot, rejoicing, says, *Oui, you have reason.*)—Her complexion, is an absolute tulip-bed. To her, Kitty Crowder was a pallid nymph: and, like Kate, she is indebted, for her ruby face, to Venus, less than Bacchus.—When seen together, you resemble the ostrich and humming-bird. The girdle of old Jack Falstaff, of ludicrous and laughter-moving memory, would not make the tenth part of an apron-string for her. Besides, she has a black, bristly beard; and the last barber, who reaped a plentiful, though painful, crop, from her phiz, assured me it was as arduous a task, to double her chin, as to double Cape Horn against the violence of a monsoon.—(Ragot says, *Oui, oui, very true.*)—She would outskirt the big bed at Ware; and fat and fruitful will be the soil, which receives her cold carcass as a tribute.—But, while I seek my friend Sir Sober System, you must keep the old tigers at bay.

Rag. Yes, Monsieur.

Major C. Yet, will he stop, muse, and moralize on every object that he sees, from a mountain to a mouse-trap; and, often, am I obliged to send and see if he has fallen into a reverie, or a river. But

the dinner, when we appear at the end of the avenue—

Rag. Sir, I have but to obey. [Exit.

Major COUNTERGUARD, *solus.*

Major C. Good God! what an altered man is Sir Sober! I must entice him again into the world. No man has a better head, or heart; and, before he grew so confoundedly serious and systematic, there was not a pleasanter fellow in England.—But, to his haunts in the wood. [Exit.

## SCENE II.

The Kitchen. SIRLOIN. To her; enter RAGOT, singing.

Sirl. What! you French fellow, you won't take the dinner? it has been ready this half hour. Come! run, rascallion; ring the bell; rouse the family. What! you think I have nothing to serve up but a fricassée of frogs, or a hamlet of eggs, or cauliflower, for your master; but your captains, or majors, don't like to live so. And Miss Charlotte, is dying for his red coat, and he, for her red cheeks, they say. As to me, I wish he were in Jamaica, Jericho, the Jordan, or in jeopardy in a French prison, or French pantry; any where, but here, for he gives me more plague than pence. I often see the colour of his cloth, but seldom the colour of his cash, for all that.

Rag. Ah! The Major is one genteel gentleman—so fashionable! No one is more sought after.

Sirl. Yes, too genteel to live at home, pay his debts, or part with his money; and, like many fa-

B 2 fashionable

shionable people, more frequently sought after, than found—when a creditor is in the case.

Rag. Ah! by gar, how you Englishwoman can talk!

Sirl. Yes, were I not to speak, stir, and strike too, in my own kitchen, I must lead the life of a slave; and I should be sorry if I had not lungs to be heard all over the house. What! do you think I am to be governed by a French fiddler?—Better be the cat than the cook, if I am to go mewling and mewling about.—I will make you know, I am Dame Despot, here; and more arbitrary than the grand Singer, in his Divan—now Mrs. Garnish, the house-keeper, is gone; and the devil and a dishclout go with her, say I—she was always peeping and prying into the corners and cupboards, and denied every body peace, or a perquisite, but herself.

Rag. Ah! very good lady—so pretty, so polite!

Sirl. Polite! I'd dress a good dinner with her, or any cook in Paris.—You may talk of your *sauce piquante*, *sauce appetissante*, and *sauce à la Reine*, too; but, if it rained sauces, I will say, with your deeds and your dishes, there are always some double dealings. Why, go into a French kitchen, with their oil, dirt and garlic, and Greenland dock, in the dog-days, would be a nosegay to it. And you Frenchmen, to be good servants, want good looking after; not one in ten can be trusted from the parlour to the pantry.

Rag. Ah! by gar, and you English servants, too!—Scapin, with all his tricks, was a saint to some, I know—ah! conscience, conscience! (*In good English.*)

Sirl. Ay; conscience, honour, and honesty, are the only words you can pronounce well; for, I suppose, you learnt them here.

Rag.

Rag. Ah! but, my good *cuisinière*, what can I do to sooth you?

Sirl. I your cousin, indeed!—get back to your own country.—

Rag. No, no—by gar, I no love French law, or French *liberté*.

Sirl. What! I suppose you are afraid of being put in requisition, to serve as a piper or powder-monkey. They tell me, they are all a pack of *publicans*, now, and dare and defy God and devil; but Old Nick, he'll cut, and carbonado too, enough of your *publicans*, by and by, I'll warrant.

Rag. (*Fiercely.*) By gar! Ragot is no republican.—Ragot love his king and country, and leave France with his late master, the Marquis, at the riot and revolution, and serve him, with *fidelité*, till he die. Me hate the republicque, and republican.

Sirl. Yes, indeed, there were my late mistress, Lady Gadabout, and her sister, Mrs. Grumble, wanted me to go over with them from Brighton to Dieppe, when they first began to talk of these *publicans*. No, Madam, my lady, said I, marry me to a puppet, or a *publican*, if I do. I hate all the roguish race—I might be obliged to fondle and fraternize with the grenadiers, and lay aside my *mauvaise hunt*, as they call it. Bad hunting, indeed! No, a Cornish hug for me, rather than such hugs.—No; I value my *mauvaise hunt* as much as—some ladies of the first fashion in the kingdom—no; I had rather hunt for cobwebs, in the corners, here, than be caught in their cobwebs. Besides, I may have my face put to peep out of that diabolical, noxious, national window, as they call it, the guillotine; and then they would pop my head in a hamper, or stick it on a pike, or spit,



spit, and not give me a Christian's funeral; for there's no Christianity, now, among them: they have ten prisons for one priest—priests, now, are as scarce, in Paris, as woodcocks, in July—and as much out of season, too.

Rag. True; they would bury the best of you in your *commune*.

Sirl. Yes; put my cold carcass in the common; in unconsecrated ground—out in the common. No, my lady, says I; Sirloin had rather be swaddled, and smothered, too, like old Jack Falstaff, with all the dirty linen in Windsor, and thrown into a black ditch, or the Thames, in a buck-basket—no; pommel me for the witch of Brentford, if I do; or put cows-horns on my head, and turn me into Herne the huntsman. There's some fun in such frolics; and I like a joke as well as another; but, at Dieppe, there are no jokes, now, among them. (Ragot says, *Ah! pauvre France!*)—Ay; and I might have a *domisilly* visit, before I had my clothes on in the morning; and I wish they had been only silly, then it might have ended in a play of fools, and not of furies. No, my lady, I'll serve you here, in England, as long as I please, and you please me, and pay me my wages; but pickle me if I go to Dieppe—to the dickens, rather than to Dieppe—no; salt me in the sea, dip me in the deep, if I do. I don't like their laws or their lingo either, nor I. Why, who'd live in such a cursed country as that, where they call bread, *pàn*, and a saucepan, a *catsroll*?

Rag. No, no;—(Pronouncing it right)—*casserole*, or *marmite*.

Sirl. Mar meat, indeed! for the deuce a bit of meat, or any thing else, they meddle with, they don't mar—mar meat, mar manners, morals, and sense

sense too, I think. Ay; I should have been shut up in a dark dungeon, half a foot square, or put in requisition, to dress frogs and fritters for the *publican* army; zounds! I would poison them all, from the citizen soldier to the citizen general, as they call them—why, I had rather make horse-flesh hotchpotch, and be scullion, in Old England, to a kennel of fox-hounds.

Rag. But, by gar, never will I return to France.

Sirl. No; you are no fool! I dare say you would rather travel about, here, crying Punch-bowls and bellows to mend. But, come! serve the dinner; the salmon will be spoilt, the soup and sauce cold, and the meat burnt to a cinder.

Rag. But my master no finished his *promenade*.

Sirl. Don't talk to me of your master's lemonade. If philosophers live on lemonade, and vegetables, *légumes* as you call them, I would rather be a turnspit dog, than a philosopher; 'tho' some dogs, now-a-days, are treated more as if they were of the Christian, than canine, species.

Enter Mrs. ARCH GOSSIP, in a travelling dress; she has, under her arm, a pug dog, with a light-coloured wig on his head, ribands, bells, &c. Sirloin stares at her, saying, Who the deuce have we here?

A. Gof. And how could the creatures show me into the kitchen? Lord! to meet such a *Hottenpot* the moment one arrives! the great greasy Gorgon! but you are Mr. Ragot, I presume. Why, I wonder, as the poets would say, you are not turned to a rock, a stone statue of Apollo—Medusa herself! Do you not see the snakes, and hear them hissing in her head?

Rag. *Douceur*—Ah! I wish you would give her a *douceur*, to stop her vile tongue.

A. Gof.

*A. Gof. Douceur*—O! that's the way you imagine we stop a person's tongue, in England, is it? Surely you have been some great gentleman's gentleman, or some gentleman great man; but I don't mean *your douceur*, the common *douceur*; but Medusa, herself, after her fall, as the poets tell us. Do you ever, like me, *provoke* the Muses? Oh! if I am to be won, when woo'd, it must be by a poet. Oh! speak to me of the poets, or of Pug; one line in poetry is worth a whole bulky, Bodleian library of prose. Oh! if Locke had but written his *Essays* in blank verse; and Newton his *Prince of Scipio* in rhyme!

*Rag.* Ah! how *superbe*!

*A. Gof.* Yet, behold your rival, in my Pug—oh, the fond, fashionable creature!

*Rag.* Ah! he has the air of the *bonne compagnie*! and *en perruque* too!

*A. Gof.* Lord! he has wigs of every colour, from the fairest Bohemian flaxen, to the true Brutus black. Oh, he is worth ten times his weight in genuine gold of Peru, or glittering diamonds of Golconda! I will sing you a song, a little poetical effusion, I made, on my Pug, extempore, at first sight, when he was murmuring, and peeping out of a milk-white wicker basket, dear creature! at the corner of the Hay Market.

*Rag.* Ah! favour us with the *petite chanson*.

### SONG.

*A. Gof.* Cupid, in either whisker, smiling,  
Lies conceal'd in Puggy's cheeks,  
Gossip of her heart beguiling,  
At every note that Puggy squeaks.  
Ah me! I love; ah me! I languish;  
(Soon, too soon, I've lost my heart:)  
Oh, the joy! and oh, the anguish!  
Never, never will we part.

*Sirl.* Ay, that's right; singing when the family ought, almost, to be supping. Come, I'll give you as good a song as that, on the black sow killed last week. Halloo! Here, Cinderilla, bring me my *tambourine*;—(*Enter CINDERILLA, a masculine black woman*)—and, d'ye hear, two pewter plates for cymbals, that I may be in the fashion, as well as Mrs. Arch Gossip—and Mr. Pug.

*Cind.* Yes, Missy.

*Sirl.* And call Moll Mopsqueezer, Drummetella, Trumpetena, Trianglena, and the whole band.

*Cind.* Yes, Missy. [*Exit.*]

*Re-enter Cinderilla (with the plates and tambourine).*  
*Enter (with several more) Moll Mopsqueezer, having a mopslick, to beat the long drum; Trumpetena, (with a trumpet and false cheeks); Drummetella, (a long drum); Trianglena, (a triangle), &c. &c.; all in appropriate dresses.*

*Sirl.* Come, are you ready?—Surely, if an emperor could play his antics, while Rome was burning, I may sing, while my meat burns.

### SONG.

Tune, *The Brown Jug*, with variations.

*Sirl.*—plays the *tambourine*, with ridiculous gestures;  
*Cinderilla*, the cymbals; and the others, their different instruments.

*Sirl.* This sow, for which now I so sob and so sigh,  
Late, stretch'd at her ease, lay and snor'd in her sty.  
In nuzzling for acorns, all sows she'd excel,  
And, oh! for a sigh, sure she bore off the bell—  
And, oh! for a grunt, sure she bore off the bell.



But her throat is now cut, by her true love forsaken,  
And salted her sides, to make roisty old bacon;  
While her nine little pigs, to her merits all raise  
Their nine little snouts, and all warble her praise—  
Their nine little snouts, and all—grunt forth her praise.

*A. Gos.* Oh! the savage!

*Sirl.* (To Cinderilla, to whom she gives the tambourine.) There—have a wire bottom made, and it will serve to sift your cinders; and you may all go to your work again, and cease your noise and nonsense. [Exeunt Cinderilla, Trumpetena, &c. &c.]

*A. Gos.* Compare my little prince and peer of pugs, to a great pig! Scandalum magnatum! Where is the marshal of the Marshalsea? My attorney, shall file a bill; prosecute for defamation; and retain the most eminent counsel in London for poor Pug!

*Sirl.* Away! I'll poison him before nine this night.

*A. Gos.* Oh! help! help! help!

*Rag.* Ah! le pauvre animal!

*A. Gos.* Well, were I in a besieged town, and allowed to carry out, on my back, what was most precious to me, I am sure I should prefer Pug to my parrot, monkey, or husband, even were he Signor Don Matador himself, my greatest favourite—of the biped kind.

*Sirl.* Come, clear the kitchen.

*A. Gos.* Well, when I marry Don Matador (but it is a secret), I will have a hat not bigger than a silver penny, and a transparent uniform of gleamy gossamer, made by a Persian fairy.

*Sirl.* Transparent! better like our first parent, Eve, at once.

*A. Gos.* But do you know how love is declared in Persia? The gentleman presents the lady with—  
a tulip,

a tulip, and—that's all; but as much as to say, This is an emblem of my passion: like the leaves of this tulip, my face is all in a blaze of love; and, like the inside, my heart is burnt as black as a coal. Have you any tulips in the garden, ha, Mr. Ragot? (Advancing towards him.) Shall we go and see?—ha, Mr. Ragot?

*Rag.* (Handing her out.)—Avec plaisir. [Exeunt.]

### SCENE III.

A Wood, in Sir Sober System's Park. Sir SOBER, sitting under a tree, with a book, and a paper, with some lines written on it.

*Sir S.* (Looking up suddenly.) Yes; even the deer in the park dread me!

Ah! haste not thus away, dear innocents,  
Dear, dappled innocents, to mortal sin  
Strangers, and mortal man's disastrous ways—  
(Save when, with desperate hounds, they seek thy haunts:)  
Stay! stay! no foe, no savage huntsman, I.  
See how they run!—Now, bounding o'er the plain,  
Now, through the brake, they force their ardent way.  
Yes! yes! thou know'st me—right; I am a man.  
Fly! fly!—each creature flies rapacious man,  
By instinct flies him, at the dawn of youth:  
Man, perilous man, wolf of God's numerous flock,  
The vilest atom of this atom world;  
The strange, ephemeral being of a day;  
The earth's base master, and oppressor—man!

Enter Major COUNTERGUARD.

*Major C.* What! my friend, Sir Sober System, my harping humourist; ever railing at man, man-  
ners,

ners, or matrimony! Why you look as if all the maladies, within the bills of mortality, were centred in your own sad self.

*Sir S.* The face is not always an index to the feelings. I am not sad; I am only serious.

*Major C.* Serious, indeed! Still wedded to solitude and silence, interrupted only by your own soliloquies. Would I could see you exchange silence for another partner—some sprightly spinster!

*Sir S.* Another, truly!—for silence and such partners never formed one and the same self.

*Major C.* You had better advertise for a dumb wife.

*Sir S.* And, if I should find this nondescript, I might not have half as much regard for her, as for my dumb waiter.

*Major C.* (*Observing the piece of paper.*) What! some ill-humoured epigram, I suppose.

*Sir S.* Yes, but there is less poetry than truth in it. Shall I revise, correct, and send it to the *Lady's Magazine*?

*Major C.* Correct your own grumbletonian, simpletonian system. (*Taking the paper, and reading.*)

Woman's affections quickly veer;

To one true point they rarely steer;

Now to the east, and now the west,

Just as each whim invades the breast:

They fluctuate, like the twirling vane,

Round, and round, and round again.

—Surely, there is more of wantonness than wit in it.

*Sir S.* Wantonness and woman, then, are well matched. She cannot be in company she likes better.

*Major*

*Major C.* Although you do consider marriage as the *biera picra*, the sacred bitter, I don't despair of seeing you surrounded with a wife, nurses, children, their cradles, cat-calls, pap, playthings, and panikins.

*Sir S.* I do not despair of seeing the men, or the monkeys of the north, south pole, or the moon, either—What! matrimony and manacles! A pretty system for a rational being! Oh! Hymen, horrors, and hornworks! To have a woman eternally at your elbow, nonsensically noisy, or sullenly silent—I would rather have a hornet's nest on the tympanum of each ear.

*Major C.* Doom me, though, rather to dance one of my own puppets, than solve one of your problems.

*Sir S.* When matrimony and happiness can be reduced to a mathematical certainty, I will marry—prove it by  $A$  plus  $B$ , divided by  $Z$ —and I am ready—for dutchess or dairy-maid.

*Major C.* I hope still to see you, happiness, and a helpmate, united.

*Sir S.* Ay, you are all hopes.

*Major C.* So much the better.

*Sir S.* So much the worse.

The joys, the youthful joys, of early dawn,  
Though fair, are fleeting too; our gayest hopes,  
Hopes and desires, are but our daylight dreams,  
The wanton, waking rhapsodies of man:  
These are the sorry semblances of truth,  
Mere adumbrations!—for the prosp'rous breeze,  
Which fondly flatters, in the morn of life,  
Ere eve, as foully fails us; yet this hope,  
Which ought to be our cure, and not our care,  
This self-same hope, is ever on the wing,  
And anxious for fresh changes—and—fresh storms—  
New days—and—new deceits!—

*Major*



*Major C.* Well, well! Very fine, very fanciful, and very like yourself; but may God ever add to my present possession, future hope; hope, which gives activity to all courage, and energy to all enterprise; hope, which made Cæsar master of the Roman empire, and Alexander master of the known world.

*Sir S.* And what if Cæsar never had been that master? Why, Rome might have lived free, and Cæsar died innocent; nor should we have seen the Imperial purple, in after-ages, stained by the follies and crimes of slaves, simpletons, chicken-feeders, fiddlers, and fly-catchers; and Alexander, without your *hopes*, might have been spared the shedding of guiltless blood and ambitious tears. Give me courage and conduct, in a good cause; in the defence, and not the destruction, of liberty and mankind.

*Major C.* There, we agree. Yet, without hope—

*Sir S.* Hope, again! I love despair. I have ever found hope a flattering friend, and a rash, ruinous, and deceitful counsellor; with more of warmth than wisdom; something always in reverision, but never in possession; furnishing us with but a false glimmer, amidst real darkness. Hope, feeds and pampers us, but despair is a wholesome regimen; and, if not the mildest, is the most merciful medicine, for all disorders of the mind; the more desperate, the more efficacious. Hope, renders us eager and anxious; despair, completes our refusal, and ends our perplexities. Go; you be ruined by the deception of your best hopes, I saved by the annihilation of mine; for, thus, I have acquired vigour, by making a virtue of necessity. My own weakness, is become my own strength; my former pursuits, are my present loathings;

loathings; my fears, are turned to rage; my hopes, to despair. Objects, which I could not obtain, I now despise. Hope, the wild and wanton companion of my youth, take you who will; despair is mine, and shall be the courage, and consolation of my future days.

*Major C.* Gracious God! Why, you rave like one possessed. But few free competitors will you find; for the world will, readily, resign your friend *despair*, in fee-simple, to you and your progeny for ever.

*Sir S.* If I am possessed, it is not of devils, however; for I cast them out when I abjured the society of unfeathered bipeds; and God forbid I should leave a race of beings, flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone, born to inherit all the fury and frailties mortality is heir to!

*Major C.* What! not to inherit your friend and favourite, *despair*. Come, come; you are a mere mixture of pride, passion, and paradox.

*Sir S.* I *was*; but paltry pride has submitted to christian humility; and passion, to human reason; but there is truth in paradox, as well as demonstration; and I love to speak the truth, be it plain or paradoxical, wholesome or otherwise.

*Major C.* 'Tis well, then, you depend not on a patron for your existence; for show me a less favourable introduction to one than truth!—but, think you, all who like to *speak*, are equally fond of *hearing*, the truth? If so, I will whisper, that you have been doubly deceived these two years, by those you much love.

*Sir S.* Love! I have nothing to do with love.

If love can boast its benefits and bliss;  
Its scatter'd roses, and its tempting sweets;

Love

Love hath its pains and penalties decreed;  
Its agonizing pains, its thorns and throes;  
Its yells and ululations too!

Major C. Yes, *love*—deceived by yourself, and your systems.

Sir S. And if I *have*—Live we not in a world in which deceit *seems* to be the general system, and cement?

Major C. And you *seem* to delight in captious contradictions.

Sir S. Every thing, *seems*!—

Trust not appearances; for cold he *seems*,  
He, who in torments burns: see murd'rous man,  
A smile assume, while hell, profoundest hell,  
Lurks in his guilty, and deceitful soul.  
Clad in the garb of woe, the youthful heir,  
The sweeping pall supports, with downcast eye,  
Dissembling; while, suborn'd, the villain stabs,  
Stabs to the heart, through simulation's guise.  
All, all but *seems*—woman's a counterfeit,  
For, while she turns, with more than heavenly smile,  
Your kind embrace to meet, she'll foully blot  
Dishonour on thy scutcheon—bastard blood!  
Supposititious whelps!—All, all but *seems*—  
This earth we tread, this convex earth, is false;  
For, while she *seems* in modest mood to sit,  
Runs gadding round the sun—himself a liar,  
For, while he *seems* his stately course to steer  
O'er heaven's high arch, serene, commanding, stands,  
Midst his obedient spheres!

Major C. Why, you are a kind of moral alchemist: you can change the meaning of, and extract morality from, every thing; it is dangerous to say a word to you.

Sir S. Yes, words and women are dangerous things; yet, indeed, many a man, in this country,  
lives

lives by his words, his wife, or his wits. The trade of wordcraft is more productive, now, than that of witchcraft, or priestcraft either.

Major C. Still the dismal view! I do believe you have some new-created, nondescript speculum, or tube, to your telescope, and that you contrive to see the dark side, even when dame Cynthia is in full beauty. As to me, though I do not boast of a *system*, I profit by the present, reflect, with pleasure, on the past, and contemplate, with *hopes*—you'll excuse me—the future.

Sir S. By past, by present, and by future, time  
Doth measure all; the present, why 't is gone,  
Nay, while we speak 't is gone, neglected, by—  
Seen, from afar, a dubious speck, then comes  
Futurity, in tenfold gloom involv'd:  
So dark, so doubtful is the future time,  
That the bought wedding, proves the winding-sheet.

The days, for triumphs chosen, are the days  
Of death and disappointment; and the hours,  
Destin'd, by man, for feasts and revelry,  
Are, by the wise decrees of God, ordain'd  
As hours of pains and punishments. The past,  
Lives but a faded form, but half impress'd  
On the mind's mem'ry, or reviving, oft,  
Affliction's barbed pangs.

Major C. Yes, well may you say that the present “yea, while we speak, is gone neglected by,” for the deuce of any dinner shall I have to-day, if you go on thus.

Sir S. (*Seeming surprised.*) Dinner!

Major C. Yes; and, in short, will you proceed, solus, in your ranting morality, or, with me, to the roast mutton? I should prefer, just now, the worst soup to the best sense, and a simple rather of bacon, in a farm-house, to the soundest feast



of reason, with Socrates himself, in the renowned Lycaum, or in the meadows, on the banks of the Ilissus. I envy not your systems, or your starvation; I only envy every man who has got a hot dinner before him, or a cold one either.

*Sir S.* Envy, is not in my system!

Envy, both mean, malign, and void of soul;  
See how she creeps, yet reigns without control:  
The brave, the great, the good, thy stings must feel,  
Their virtues, tortur'd on thy wanton wheel.  
Fearful, yet free to strike, this vice assumes  
Each shape, and, in each shape, some worth consumes:  
Compound of grief, of malice, rage, despair,  
Hatred and hell, each poisonous passion's there.  
A conscious coward too—to darkness doom'd,  
By Satan gender'd, thou!—lie, lie with him entomb'd,

*Major C.* Come along, come along, to the devil all the envy: give me the eatables. *(Pulls out Sir Sober System.)*

END OF ACT I.

## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

*The Stable Yard of an Inn, on the Bath Road.*

*CRAFT, and ELIZA's Livery Servant.*

*Servant.*

**Y**ES, heavy; *(Pointing to his pocket)*—my mistress has forty thousand pounds now, besides old square-toes.

*Cra.* Heavy! Why, then, we must have four horses—Ha?

*Serv.* Fourteen, if you choose: she is able enough to pay for them.

*Cra.* Well, go to the bar, and get a glass of wine.

*Serv.* Suppose I take a couple; one for each extra horse? *[Exit Servant.]*

*Cra.* Ostler—John Ostler; get four horses for that chaise.

*Ostler. (Entering.)* I am sure we have enough of them, in the stable, swelling for want of work; but a pair was ordered—

*Cra.* Four, I say; leave the rest to me.

*[Exit Cra.]*

### SCENE II.

*A Room at the Inn.—ELIZA and CHARLOTTE.*

*Eliza.* But is your brother, Sir Sober System, become a serious philosopher?

D 2

*Char.*

*Char. Serious*, my Eliza! Why, to him, Don Quixote was a merry-andrew, and Heraclitus a harlequin: he is more occupied by his system, than Mr. Lenitive with his prize No. 2, 5, 3, 8.

*Eliza*. You ~~must~~ excuse my laughing a little, at your brother.

*Char.* O yes! I laugh, though I lament. What! a man of his figure, fashion, and address, not yet twenty-eight, born to adorn and animate society, to seclude himself in the country, and converse only with the dead in his study, or the deer in his park! He wanders, in the woods, or sits, in a great armed-chair, from sun-rise to sun-set, with fastened doors and full-grown folios; and, in the evening, instead of taking his nap, or nightcap, calls for his telescope—There is not a sign, or star, he does not know, from Aries to Pisces; from the Great Bear, to the little *Bow-wow*.

*Eliz.* And not found out the longitude yet?

*Char.* No; though he talks to me of longitude and latitude, of parallax, nucleus, and nebulae, ascending and descending nodes, till my noddle nods so, I am obliged to *ascend* to my pillow. If I ask him to go out to dinner, a race, rout, or ball, he replies, "You may go, if you please, but it is not in my system." Yet who, once more gay or agreeable to what he, now, calls our trifling sex?

*Eliza.* Though he neglects the sex, I am sure he still loves his sister. But, from whence are we to date his conversion, from fashion to philosophy? Not, I hope, by the French calendar, 21st Floreal, or some such jargon.

*Char.* No, thank God! the system of his brain and sense of his duty keep him far from the infectious

tious society of jacobinism, atheism, civism, and all such furious and fatal *isms*. He is not one of those who will reject the first chapter of Genesis for the foolish chapter of accidents; he is a stern and steady advocate for true religion and true liberty: but how happy will you make me by accompanying me in my involuntary retirement, at Greenwood Park!

*Eliza.* Surely, in the country, you have, at least, to interest you, honesty without guile, manners without art, and beauty without paint.

*Char.* However that may be, give me London: though you do, sometimes, see the picture reversed, and guile without honesty, art without manners, and paint without beauty.

*Eliza.* God bless me! when women approach to nine times seven, the grand climacteric, that's the time, at sixty-three, our most fashionable females want to hide and humour their crow's-feet, frowns, furrows, dells, and disasters. Why, look at Lady Arch-varnish, who is so plated and plastered, she fears to move her neck, lest the composition should crack, and discover gaping chasms—like Calabria after an earthquake.

*Char.* Yet you will allow it displays some ingenuity to arrive at sixty-three, and be a *crack* beauty to the last.

*Eliza.* But, I believe, long before sixty-three, Lady Arch-varnish subsidized and secured those foreign auxiliaries, paint, patches, and plumpers.

*Char.* What! do you think it difficult to secure an ally without a subsidy?

*Eliza.* Can we always secure one with a subsidy? But have you no society, at Greenwood?

*Char.* None, but the snuffing vicar and snoring house-dog; the blue clouds by day and the blue devils



devils by night. Yet who so indulgent, as my brother? I am mistress of the house, and might have the direction of his remaining fortune, shattered and shorn as it is by former dilapidations, his own imprudence, usurious annuitants, and accommodating attornies, now self-styled, out of Chancery as well as *in* solicitors.

*Eliza.* What do they begin to be ashamed of their name? However, where there are signs of shame, there may be hopes of reformation.

*Char.* Would that some of them had the grace to be ashamed of any thing!

*Eliza.* Instead of solicitors, perhaps, they will soon call themselves suitors; but the suitors will be nonsuited, I believe, if they move you, or myself, for a habeas corpus.

*Char.* As Old Nick only can suit some of them here, he, no doubt, will nonsuit enough, hereafter.

*Eliza.* But, I think, I shall love the simplicity of the country, and the people.

*Char.* Believe me, rustic villany and vanity assume but a different form and phiz: it is only a change from a town to a country dress.

*Eliza.* Then times, too, are changed, or pastorals feigned.

*Char.* A little of both, perhaps. Yet, I hope, I am not very wicked if I acknowledge I prefer London to the country; the rattling of carriages to the roaring of cascades; a song to a psalm, and a play to a pulpit; a chattering man to a chattering rill, and the ugliest peer to the prettiest pastoral.

*Enter CRAFT, bowing low.*

*Cra.* You ordered four horses, ladies, I think. It is a long stage, and the roads are terribly bad and

and heavy, and the waters have lately been out, and broken them up surprisngly. We are extremely subject to land floods, here.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* He has opened the floodgates of his invention, and iniquity, too, on us, I fancy.

*Cra.* And we have had such a run, I never knew any thing like it, even at a dissolution of Parliament.

*Char.* We found the roads very light, my friend, and dusty enough, faith, in spite of the halfpenny water-carts, between Brentford and London.

*Cra.* Ay, Madam, but as you go downwards—besides, the hills! Berkshire is such a mountainous country! and next Monday, will be election Monday, at Eton; and yesterday, was the Montem, and to-morrow, will be the assizes, at Reading, and next day, the races; and it is rumoured that one of the county members means to accept of the Chiltern hundreds; but that, indeed, I doubt.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* And, faith, I doubt every word you have yet uttered.

*Cra.* And so much company comes to the Terrace, at Windsor, that the horses are worked almost to death, and are panting, now, in the stable, for breath. And the quantity of people going to Bath—and——

*Eliza.* And—I see, we are to have four horses; so let them be ready.

*Cra. (Aside.)* Well, that point is gained. *[Exit, bowing.]*

*Eliza.* What impudence this landlord has! Why election Monday will not be this month. The Montem, was last summer. There is scarcely a hill, except Salt Hill, on the whole road; and the rest of his story is in a similar strain of professional

fional falsehood. But, I am told, your friend Major Counterguard, is an agreeable man.

*Char.* God bless me! did I not tell you so myself? And is it an uncommon thing for a woman to like an amiable man?

*Eliza.* Like him, only?

*Char.* No, I love him; but I have a thousand reasons against marrying him, yet.

*Eliza.* Then you have a thousand more than most, of either sex, for what they do, or leave undone, either.

*Char.* Nay, is not this called the age of reason? But how different reason in conversation, and conduct!

*Eliza.* Say, the age of ribaldry, rhapsody, and riot; less the age of reason, than of reasoners; but, luckily, it is not reason that governs the world, but the world that governs reason.—When do you intend to marry?

*Char.* You know my situation. I have but two thousand pounds, and that my brother generously gave me, when he succeeded to an encumbered estate; for my father, you know, had not a heart to save.

*Eliza.* And you, my Charlotte, I am sure, have not a heart to complain.

*Char.* No, I would tear it from its seat, if I had. Though my father made me poor, he did not make me ungrateful. God forbid I should utter one momentary murmur at his imprudence; for, if his prodigality left me nothing to receive, when dead, his kindness left me nothing to ask, when living.

*Eliza.* I, always, admired your heart. To be sure, these are not times to live on love and the interest of two thousand pounds. But, how strangely

have I joined together, what ought ever to be separated—love and interest!

*Char.* Yet we have more of interest, without love, than love, without interest.

*Eliza.* You are too ingenuous, to live in the fashionable world.

*Char.* Lord! I should not care if I had a window in my breast, that every body might see the company there; as, I think, my brother says one of the old philosophers wished he had, or every body had, or somebody had, I know not which—an old Greek, I suppose; and a curious curmudgeon, I dare say.

*Eliza.* I believe that you would have little, though many a great deal, to fear, if these Grecian windows came much into fashion. They would require very dark blinds, and many a one would be hastily blocked up, from the surveyor's eye, or the tenants, within, subject to triple assessed taxes, charges, and surcharges, too.

*Char.* And without hopes from appeal to commissioners, below, or Christ, above.

*Eliza.* Yet, what discoveries should we make through these breast windows! There we should see the orator exclaiming loudly for the good of himself; the lawyer wrangling for—his fee; the lover fighting for possession of his mistress's—fortune; and all mankind most sincerely attached to—themselves.

*Char.* You are so severe, one would think you rather an autumnal, than a vernal, beauty; but, I hope, there is more of satire than truth, in what you say.

*Eliza.* A little of each. But confidence, beggars confidence. I will open the window, in my breast, to you: I mean, if it is only to revenge the sex,



to marry your brother, immediately.—But here comes Mr. Craft, again. Who have we in his train?

*Enter CRAFT, with Waiters, who bring in knives, plates, cloth, &c. which are hastily put on the table.*

*Char.* Why, we did not order dinner.

*Cra.* Yes, Madam, you may be assured of the best treatment, best of every thing, here: we have our river-fish, all alive; and our sea-fish fresh from Billingsgate, three times a day, by the Bath coaches. Excellent Thames eels, salmon, flounders, and gudgeons!

*Eliza.* (*Aside.*) He takes us for gudgeons, you see.

*Cra.* There cannot be better: our ducks are of the Muscovy kind; as large as wild geese, and much better flavoured.

*Char.* (*Aside.*) Or for geese——

*Cra.* Always fresh, and never fishy: our fowls are from Dorking, and our butcher is known all over the country; the wines, are neat as imported, and have been in the cellar these twenty years—no—I beg pardon—nearly nineteen; they were safe lodged the summer before Lord Rodney broke the French line, in the West Indies, an example which has been most nobly followed, as we all know, and, I am sure, all feel, as we ought.

*Eliza.* (*Aside.*) Come, he has ended well, at least.

*Char.* (*Aside.*) But, *has* he ended?

*Cra.* The cloth, ladies, is already laid.—Who's there?—Come, bustle about, waiters: the ladies are in a hurry for their dinners. Come! put your best legs foremost.

(*Enter more Waiters, with dinner, &c.*)

—Some madeira, hock, cider, cool tankard—quick, quick! [*Exit Craft.*

(*The dinner is put on the table.*)—[*Exeunt Waiters.*

*Eliza.* This is a cool fellow, methinks; but let us see how far his impudence will carry him.

*Char.* Like many other people I know—a good deal further, I believe, than his conscience can follow him. He must, surely, have had a double dip in the Shannon.

*Eliza.* Faith, in these days, our own baths, in, and near, the metropolis, are equally efficacious. A simple dip, in the Thames, will brace the features into as settled and surprising an intrepidity as daily immersion in the Shannon; impudence, like ignorance, is confined to no country. (*The dinner remains untouched.*) However, I *will* be your sister; and Lady System—what a name!

*Char.* You do not recollect that my brother must change *his* name to Allworthy, when he marries you.

*Eliza.* I forgot—but then he will have an opportunity of dropping his nonsense and his name together.

*Char.* As to the name, indeed, I don't care how soon I change it myself; yet those words—"I will," are daring and desperate monosyllables for a woman to utter, and the origin of half the misery and evil our sex is doomed to suffer.

*Eliza.* And that's the reason, I conclude, we hammer and hesitate so, and are frightened to death, faltering out, in dubious phrase, and with downcast eyes—"I will."

*Char.* But we contrive to get it out at last. A woman hesitates, resolves, repents, relapses, re-relapses, and 'midst many demi-doubts and demi-denials, our vows are ratified; and, finally, by a retrograde motion, after various eccentricities, we become staid and stationary in the sign—or constellation—of *Matrimony*—

*Eliza.* Which, too frequently, has some analogy to the sign of the *Scorpion*, or the *Crab*; and better, surely, to remain stationary in *Virgo*, than coalesce with the *crabs*, *scorpions*, or *bears*, of this nether world. Yet there is *one* sign in the zodiac where we reign triumphant. What think you of *Capricornus*?

*Char.* Husbands have most reason to think of that gentleman. But my brother says, matrimony is not in his system: and he does so rail against it—like a fleeced client at a fallacious attorney.

*Eliza.* Rail!—the best sign imaginable!—(*Taking her by the hand.*) I will be your sister-in-law, before this day week.

*Char.* Then you must say, Mr. Philosopher, will you break your plan, and marry me?

*Eliza.* No—I need not say so: we women have a thousand winning, winding ways, and can ask, and answer, too, queer questions, without speaking a word. What think you of our armory of sighs, blushes, significant looks, and soothing flattery, and the rest of our small-arms and artillery?

*Char.* A countenance, indeed, like yours, which is all expression, can say and signify much; but remember, I am to live with you, and do as I like, all day long, till I choose to marry, and march.

*Eliza.* Agreed!

*Char.*

*Char.* If any woman can succeed, surely you will—a young and handsome heiress, with the art, or rather, the nature, of pleasing to perfection.

*Eliz.* Yes, *now*, an heiress; but, once, you know, I had a sister, the partner of my fortune, and fate.

—We, from one common stock,  
Together sprang, which grew, to guard our youth,  
Shade and protectress of two tender shoots.  
Oft would our arms, our artless arms, outstretch'd,  
Meet, like twin tendrils of one parent vine;  
And, thus, whole days we liv'd, and lov'd, and grew,  
And, smiling, flourish'd in a close embrace,  
Entwining and entwin'd!

But I won't enter on a melancholy topic, now, as I know, your heart would turn and tremble, and your eyes, too, mingle their tears with those of your friend.

*Char.* Yet sweet the tender tears which friendship sheds,

And sweet those drops, which friendship, too, returns:  
And, thus, so kind our God and Maker is,  
So just the dispensations of his love,  
Some balm, some consolation we derive,  
Ev'n from our very tears!

But, suppose we take a walk in the garden, till the horses are ready, and, there, tell me if you seriously intend to marry my brother.

*Eliza.* Seriously; now I know so much of his pursuits, plans, and philosophy, I shall, soon, moor him safe, with chains, in the harbour of Matrimony.

*Char.* To be sure, the system of a philosopher is but a frail and fanciful bark; yet you have, still, much of his temper and trim to discover.

*Eliza.* Yet, what shifts so often as wind and whim? But, I shall find out his trim, and sail down Bond-street, under his convoy.

SONG



## SONG—by ELIZA.

Do but find out your gentleman's trim,  
Do but find out your gentleman's trim;  
Then each zephyr that blows,  
And each current that flows,  
Shall aid you to baffle his ways, and his whim—  
When you've found out your gentleman's trim.

[Exeunt.]

## SCENE III.

*A Garden, with a Green-house; an Arbour, Beds of Flowers, &c. &c.*—CHARLOTTE and ELIZA.

*Enter GRAFT (on the opposite side), with flowers in his hand.*

*Graft.* I beg, ladies, to present you with bouquets; am happy to be honor'd with your company in my garden: you may gather any thing you please—shrubs, green-house plants, fruits or flowers; the virgin's bower, the passion-flower, peaches, hyacinths, narcissuses, sweetwilliams, sweet sultans, coxcombs, everlasting, catchflies, skull-caps, Venus's looking-glass, lady's slipper, lady's—chemises, as our neighbour, Mrs. Prim, calls them—sensitive plant, love-apples, devil in a bush, bachelors buttons, Canterbury bells, columbines, true-love, loose-strife, crow's-foot, or wormwood; and I had, almost, forgotten the hellebore, Christmas flower, which reminds me, even in the midst of summer, of a Christmas-box, though I am sure the ladies will remember the gardener—now.

*Eliz.* You seem to have every thing here, my friend, but *thrift*; and, pray, what is your name?

*Graft.* Kit Graft, Madam, at your service.

*Eliz.*

*Eliz.* *Graft*, did you say?

*Graft.* O! no, Madam; that is my—master's name.

*Eliz.* So I thought, *Graft* by name, and nature, too, I believe. (*Aside.*)—However—(*She gives him some money—so does Charlotte.*)

*Graft.* And the Imperial crowns were, early in the summer, in full vigour and perfection, but seem, now, going off fast; and whether they will show themselves, next season, is very doubtful. They require a great deal of rich soil, propping and coaxing, too; and, after all, are but shy and shoot like most of your exotics. I love our healthy indigenous plants, best, I confess: as to the aquatics, indeed, they are never known to fail: they are the noblest of evergreens. But do, ladies, pray, walk on. You may pick and choose. Though, had it not been for our golden rods, our constancy, our hearts of oak, our snap-dragons, our flags, and our honesty, the dog's tooth, the scabiuffles, and the tricolors, would have overrun, and destroyed, every thing; and there might not have been a flower, now, in this, or any other garden in England.

[Exeunt.]

## SCENE IV.

ELIZA and CHARLOTTE (*entering a room at the inn*) meet the Waiter, who presents a bill to Eliza.

*Waiter.* You call'd for your bill, ladies, I believe.

*Char.* No, faith, you are too kind to let us call for any thing—but our carriage, to be gone.

*Eliza.* (*Reads.*) "Dinners; servants ditto; Madeira; claret; hock; &c. &c. 6l. 9s. 6d."—What! for a dinner we neither ordered nor ate?

*Waiter.* Indeed, Madam, we thought you ordered it;



it; and—I hope you will please to give the waiter something: we have been as quick as possible.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* Yes, always quick enough at a falsehood, I dare say. *(Eliza pays the bill, and gives him some money.)*

*[Exit Waiter, pushing in the Chambermaid.]*

*Chamb.* The chambermaid, Madam; I got you the best beds in the house ready, and had them all well aired, this damp weather, thinking you would please to sleep here; or you might have had the suite of apartments occupied, last night, by Lord and Lady Lifeless, and his Lordship's sister, Lady Louisa Lazybones, who are just up. We have every thing ready, on this road.

*Char. (Aside.)* You have lies enough ready, I am sure. *(Eliza gives the Chambermaid money.)*

*[Exit Chambermaid, who shows the Ostler the way in.]*

*Ostler.* The carriage is at the door, Madam; I hope you won't forget the ostler. Four of the best horses in the kingdom, all fresh, free, and as clean-beeled as any on the Bath road; willing cattle, and willing lads; all prepared to start.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* All prepared, I see, in the same note. *(She gives him some money.)*

*[Exit Ostler, showing Boots in.]*

*Enter Boots.*

*Eliza.* And, pray, who are you?

*Boots.* I am Bob Brush, the Boots, Madam. I hopes you won't go and neglect poor me. I has a hard place of it, and nothing but what the good ladies and gentlemen gives me.

*Char.* What! you clean the ladies' boots, do you?

*Boots.*

*Boots.* Oh! yes, Madam, and their clogs, and sabots, as they calls them; and brushes their spencers, too.

*Eliza.* But we have neither boots, clogs, sabots, nor spencers.

*Boots.* But *(scratching his head)*—I am sure, you might have had them, Madam, if you had pleased.

*Eliza.* And I might add verjuice to my vinegar. I think the logic of Mr. Boots resembles the law and logic of the Commissary our Yorick met, at the gate of Lyons, who was to pay for two stages, whether he chose the rapid Rhone, or the rumbling fiacre, as he might go by land—"if he pleased." Come, *(giving him some money,)* brush off, Mr. Boots.

*[Exit Boots, bowing.]*

*Char.* But what were the law and logic of a French Commissary, in former days, to the existing laws and execrable logic, in this hour of liberty?

*Eliza.* As a day to eternity; or the scratch of a pin to a slice of a cimeter.

*Enter CHATTER, with some Windsor chairs.*

*Chat.* Three dozen of Windsor chairs, Madam, I think the waiter said. The rest, shall be finished off hand; dark green, I presume; we paint them all so, now. I will send them by the waggon, next week. To what part of the country?

*Char.* Why, you blockhead, this lady lives in town.

*Chat.* O, Madam! we make more for town, than country. Not a street, court, or alley, but you see my Windsor chairs; and all the squares, in London, you know, have been planted with trees, and turned into flower-beds, rural retreats, and shady shrubberies, where you see a variety of evergreens

evergreens—and *nevergreens*.---It is surprising the demand I have for my Windsor chairs.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* Faith! if he manufactures half as many Windsor chairs, as Canterbury tales, he will pay profusely to the income-tax.

*Chat.* Eighteen waggon-loads went last week for the young boarding-school ladies, in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, where they sit and enjoy a free air from the fields, and a fine view of the Foundling. And—

*Char. (Ringing the bell.) Enter Waiter.* This is too much! Waiter, turn out this chattering chairmaker. For God's sake, let us begone from such a set of impostors!

*Waiter. (With composure.)* O, Madam! the man must have made a mistake. It was in No. 2, the ladies ordered the Windsor chairs, to go a long way off; near where father Thames and the sacred Isis murmur, and mingle, and are lost in each other. *[Exeunt Chatter and Waiter.]*

*Char.* Come, methinks we have more cause to murmur, every moment we stay here. These fellows are all connected together, like the secret committee of a revolutionary club, in a labyrinth of iniquity, and difficult is it for any one, but Satan and themselves, to find the clue. *[Going.]*

*An Irish Beggar-woman (BET, O'BOTHERUM, O'BALDERDASH) appears at the window, with a child.*

*Bet.* Ah, pillelew! pillelew! sweet Jasus! be with you, my dears. Arrah! and did you call the poor woman? Och, dear! and that you did, I'll engage, now.—Arrah! great God! bless your sweet honours: for the love of mercy and little Ireland, do give one tirtener to a poor wandering widow, with nine and twenty fatherless children, who

who would all be motherless, too, sure enough, if it were not for poor Bet O'Balderdash herself, now, who will soon have another, to make the tirtieth.—Ah! by St. Patrick, who preached christianity to our souls and bodies too, and I have not, broke a bit of bread, no nor tasted a poratoo either, ever since I left my lodgings, at St. Giles's, where I paid tree raps for my bed, and lay twelve blessed nights, spachless, with a smothering at my heart.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* Faith! I think she has found her tongue, at last.

*Bet.* No, not these two long days, that I have been travelling to go to Cork, by water; though soon, I hopes, to go by land, indeed, indeed, by my truth, when this little bit of an union takes place, and the two kingdoms are joined in one, d'ye see; and, then, we may pace it on foot, instead of paying in the packet. Arrah! and I wish I were at Cork, now, at the sign of the Blast of Wind, and Golden Grid-iron, and by Jasus I'd give you a noggin of as good currant whiskey, as ever Noah's niece drank, when she lived at Carricfergus; or I am no true Milesian. Then be aisy, Pat, in opposing this union. Blarney for that, be aisy I say!

*Char.* Why, you are a young woman, to have such a large family!

*Bet.* Arrah! my dear, but, in Ireland, we always has a brace, and often tree at a time. By gad! children, there, are as plentiful as shamrocks, on St. Patrick's day in the morning.

*Eliza.* Well, well! here is something for you. *(Gives her some money.)*

*Bet.* Ah, long life to you! Good luck to your soul, wherever it goes! for the devil a one rap, but two, have I rubbed against another, this many a day, strike me with a doldrum, if I have. And



now, my dear (to Charlotte)—and have not you got a taster for poor Bet, O'Botherum, O'Balderdash, whose husband served The King fifty years, at home and abroad, and was at last *kilt*, in a scurvy way, being run over, by a noddy, between Dublin and Drogheda, and ~~was~~ afterwards, *kilt dead*, by the hoof of the baste; and, if it were not for my child here, I wish, by my troth, I had been kilt dead too. And there was my cousin, Norah, she was struck dim, while she was digging Dungarvan apples, and sent, spachless, to plant potatoes, next season, in the sky. And there was my poor sister, Judy—

*Eliza.* In God's name, how many more relations?

*Bet.* Who had the chin-cough, too, into the bargain. She died, in cutting her second teeth; and Patrick, O'Daugherrie, O'Botherum, O'Balderdash, he tumbled off the Giant's Causeway into—the Lake of Killarney; and every body knows the Lake of Killarney, and because why? Because, sure enough, every bogtrotter in Ireland has been there; for it is as well known as London Bridge at high water, or the family of the Blunderheads, in England, or the O'Balderdashes, in Ireland, both *auld*, and ancient families, before the O'Neals reigned in the North, or Bryan Boro fought at Clontarf. And there was Billy, O'Botherum O'Balderdash, he was *drount* crossing the Liffy, above Essex Bridge, in his own ship, loaded with brooms and potatoes for North Wales. And I will tell you your fortunes, ladies, and how poor Billy was picked up out of the herring-pond, near the Hill of Howth, by a fisherman, and *waked* for a whole eight days; and he was as straight as an

arrow,

arrow, and made as pretty a corpse as any was in all Ireland. (*Howling, and pretending to cry.*)

*Char.* (*Giving her money.*) Well, but what do you mean by *waked*?

*Bet.* *Waked!* arrah! and if you had ever been in Ireland, you would not ask what *waked* is?—But, true enough, *our wake* is not *your wake*, but more like your *sleep*. Ah, sure! and there is such wailing and whiskey, and weeping over the body; such pillelews, they would do your heart good to hear them. Ah! Pillelew! Pillelew! I am the girl that can give the true pillelew, by Jasus!

*Eliza.* Away! away! or we shall lose the teeth out of our heads. (*Going; the Landlord, Waiters, &c. &c. come in bowing low.*)

*Cra.* I wish you a good journey, ladies. I hope you will remember this house, when you return.

*Eliza.* (*Drily.*) Yes, we will remember it.

[*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE V.

*Sir SOBER SYSTEM and Major COUNTERGUARD, but just got to the end of the avenue, leading to an old-fashioned house, seen in a park, at a distance.*

*Major C.* Come on! come on! for God's sake, for my sake, the dinner's sake. I am as hungry as if I had been lost, for this last week, in the woods of America, living on cranberries and fireflies. I will allow any thing you please, in, or out of, reason—that men were, formerly, born with tails behind, five cubits in length, or with umbrellas, or firelocks, in their hands; I will not contradict you, for I know you love an argument better than an apple-pie at any time; I agree, it is all

as



as plain as—Corporal Trim's story of the King of Bohemia and his seven castles.

*Sir S.* As to the system of men-monkeys, or monkey-men, I leave that to metaphysicians, more moody and fanciful than myself; yet, I will assert that man, in his actions, partakes much of the monkey, being sly, selfish, imitative, and malicious; and, when our ancestors lived in the woods, clothed in the skins of beasts, the race certainly *might* have been crossed by a simea hamadryas, or a dog-faced monkey; and, hence, the monkey, with a nasal promontory, vulgarly called, nose. You will admit the possibility?—

*Major C.* Oh! yes; if you will admit me into your dining-room.

*Sir S.* Dining-room! Such men, as you, ever prefer sensuality to sentiment; Epicurus to Epictetus.

*Major C.* Give me a slice of Squire Aristippus's philosophy; I am willing to suffer penalties as well as enjoy pleasures—there's no rose without a thorn.

*Sir S.* So much the better; God, in this, as in every thing, has been directly, or indirectly, kind to his creatures; by seeming severity, but real love, he has infused bitters with our sweets; he arrests us in the course of our ruinous pursuits, and, in mercy to mankind, has made our excesses, not only perishable, but painful.

*Major C.* I am glad to hear you, in this age of fancy and infidelity, speak thus of your God. I am a soldier, but, thanks to his grace, no atheist.

*Sir S.* What honest, what thinking person, *can* be? Can man, or memory, remind me of the day that I have doubted, or denied, my Creator? *my* philosophy, *my* liberty, both, are of the *old* school;  
5 I love,

I love, and will speak of them, both: sound philosophy, and the liberty of the law, not the lawless.

*Major C.* Why, the words liberty and philosophy have been so abused, they are the butt of every fool!

*Sir S.* Then, I hope, they are strongly posted; for the host of fools is a numerous host.

*Major C.* And is that precious part of your system, the destruction of the passions, of the new, or old, school?

*Sir S.* Be that as it may, it is the fundamental part of my system.

Man's mind ne'er tranquil, ne'er repos'd can be,  
While he is doom'd to nurture and maintain  
Those vicious vipers, passions, in his breast.  
Our passions, like wild monsters of the wood,  
Are ever lurking in their hiding holes,  
Or prowling forth for prey; to tear, or tempt,  
The thoughtless passenger to shame, or death.

*Major C.* And when will you discover that these very passions are an intimate and integral part of our constitution, and that it is the business of philosophy to regulate, and not ruin, them?

*Sir S.* Ruin them! No; because they get the start, and ruin us first.

*Major C.* But, if you move on thus, rather as if you were going to a funeral than a feast, I am *off*, by single file, and will get the first start, and steak too, leaving you, and your heavy baggage, your philosophy, to bring up the rear. But your perverted mind, now, can derive satisfaction from nothing—mine, from every thing. I can admire truth, and laugh at falsehood, and enjoy, by turns, solitude and society.

*Sir S.* Society, indeed! And do you call a rude, indigested, incongruous, casual collection of atoms,

an unamiable assemblage, a fortuitous concourse of fortuitous bipeds, with the manners of monkeys, and misnomer of men, *society*? Go into this *society*, and what do you meet? In the country, nothing but petty scandal and party politics; vapid truths or vexatious falsehoods; noxious air, noise, and nonsense; while, in town, you suffer in health, honesty, patience, and purse.

*Major C.* Well done!—What! you forget the joys of love?

*Sir S.* Love, leads to horror, hatred, and horns. Society is, at best, but an armed neutrality; and, as our divine poet says, “all the world’s a stage.”

*Major C.* True; but, on this stage, thank God! we have comedies, as well as tragedies. You may choose the buskin, I the sock; you go, with your white handkerchief and wisdom-worn visage, to the tragedy, I will take a ticket, and trip, to the comedy.

*Sir S.* (*Seeming inattentive to what has passed.*) Yes, “all the world’s a stage.”

*Major C.* I wish to God I was at any stage, where I could get a mutton-chop, or beef-steak—so, adieu—you may finish your spouting, while I go and begin my soup. Adieu, Mr. Philosopher. [*Exit.*]

*Sir S.* (*Walking slowly and seriously on.*) Yes, ’t is a stage!

Some play the statesman, some the tool,

Some the dissembler play;

Some play the fiddle, all the fool,

And, thus, life’s play’d away. [*Exit.*]

END OF ACT II.

## ACT III.

### SCENE I.

*Enter, on one side, Mrs. ARCH GOSSIP, and a Girl, carrying her pug-dog, and a satin cushion for him to sleep on. The dog is dressed in a wig of a different colour from that which he appeared in, before, different ribands, &c. To her, on the other side, enter RAGOT.*

*Ragot.*

AH! Madame; I am glad to see you again.

*A. Gof.* But, I am sure, I have not been glad to see any thing, since I left Hyde Park Corner, except you and the tulip-bed.—Ha! Mr. Ragot?

*Rag.* Ah! I fear you have hardly recovered de fatigue of de stage-coach! *peut-être.*

*A. Gof.* (*Assuming airs.*) Pot-eight! I thought you were, pot-eight, a little more polite. What! deposit my sacred self in the cramped-up corner of one of those dangerous, diurnal, itinerant vehicles, vulgarly denominated—*clept*, as the poets would say, a stage; and to be obliged to go in a hackney-coach, filled with straw and vermin, to rendezvous at the White Horse Cellar, amidst parcels, porters, returned chaises, and returning shabs—noisy coachmen and Norfolk turkies. No, I only send my cat and my comb brother (*pointing to the Girl*) in the stage. How can there be any satisfaction in so multifarious a mixture of society?



ciety? No mutual knowledge, no susceptibility—and, without some susceptibility, what is life?—Ha, Mr. Ragot? a stage! but you are given to mirth, as the clay-formed mortals call it—to mirth, as the poet of *Miltoz* says, “in heaven yclept “Euphrosyne.”

Rag. Ah! pardon; (I know you English lady-maids live as well, and your *travail* is as good as dat of your mistress.

A. Gof. Ods mittens! Mr. Ragot, take care what you say. We *travel* as well, you mean—thank God, I know nothing of *travail*. Ha! Mr. Ragot? but I must tell you, such words as mistress and lady's maid have long been *expounded* from our fashionable vocabulary. We are known by the style, title, and dignity of Mrs. Maria, Matilda, Arch Gossip, and Miss Elizabeth Allworthy.

Rag. Ah! ten you shall be here *clipt* lady; and no maid.

A. Gof. Oh! help! help! If you deal in such double tenders, I shall not think myself safe alone with you. Ha! Mr. Ragot? but I'm sure you won't affront a lady. Ha! Mr. Ragot!

Rag. But Madame Bobine, Miss Charlotte's maid—no, by Gar, she no maid either.

A. Gof. Again!—If you go on thus, there won't be a maid in all Berkshire. Ha! Mr. Ragot? but do you know I have not yet seen a dryad, or *hum-dryad*, fairy, or elfin knight, dancing on the green, or whisking in the wood; not even a dying shepherd. Ha! Mr. Ragot?

Rag. Ah! if Ragot was but one shepherd, one Berger. (Falls at her feet.)

A. Gof. Rise, pray, Mr. Burgess, for here comes the philosopher. [Exit; both languishing.

SCENE

SCENE II.

Dinner on the table, dumb waiters, &c. Major COUNTERGUARD sitting at dinner. RAGOT.

Major. C. Hot soup against cold soliloquy, at any time. (To Ragot.) Come! a tune.

Ragot. (Taking a violin out of his pocket, plays and sings.)

*Ne songeons qu'à nous rejouir  
La grande affaire est le plaisir\*.*

Enter Sir SOBER SYSTEM, serious, and repeating:

Some play the fiddle, all the fool;  
And, thus, life's play'd away.

Sir S. (Seizes the fiddle, flings it down, and stamps upon it, saying) Out! begone! Think you I want catgut with my cauliflowers?

Rag. Ah! *pauvre violon*! Dis is some of my master's practical philosophy. [Exit.

Major C. You see, I am more attached to substance than system. I have half done my dinner, and here is your's—a crust of bread, a cauliflower, and lemonade. Come, come, some of the roast beef of Old England!

Sir S. No; I am neither a carnivorous nor a winebibbing animal. What, though I do see fish swallow fish, bird devour bird, beast tear beast, and man slaughter man, I would rather sojourn with the wild asses than ever pollute myself again with the meat of animals, manners of the age, society, women, or wine—they are not in my system.

\* Moliere—Monf. de Pourceaugnac.



*Major C.* And all this moody and mistaken misanthropy from a wounded sensibility, because, early, you satiated yourself by the excesses of a London life; injured your health and fortune; and, the commonest of common occurrences, were cheated by an attorney, tricked by your mistress, plundered by *Faro's* host, and unable to borrow money of your fashionable friends. Though you delight to be singular, I love all wine, and all womankind.

*Sir S.* Yes, and all kind women, too, or you are much belied.

*Major C.* So I'll drink to the fair sex, and to old Bacchus, the first and most famous of all vintagers.

*Sir S.* Yet some say Noah planted the vine.

*Major C.* Thank you for the toast; here goes to old Noah, and his messmates in the ark, pair and pair, bipeds and quadrupeds, from the cooing doves to the crabbed house-dogs. But what say you to Eliza? she will be here this evening.

*Sir S.* (*Pointing to the door.*) Then I will be there.

*Major C.* (*Drinking.*) Eliza Allworthy! — a more beautiful, sensible, engaging girl, there is not in England.

*Sir S.* I often hear much of the handsomest woman, and the handsomest horse, in England. I have not seen Eliza since she was a giddy girl of fifteen; though, when I was abroad, Charlotte and this *paragon* were inseparable. She has lived, lately, with her father, in London, that matron of harlots and housebreakers. Man might be happy, had he resolution enough to form a system of philosophy, and retire into the country; out of the way of temptation; though, *now*, indeed, there is no temptation I could not withstand!

*Major*

*Major C.* Then you are the first man in the world, who could resist *all* allurements.

*Sir S.* Would I *had* been the *first* man! Had I been Adam, there would have been neither sin, sorrow, death, desolation, nor——

*Major C.* What! no Pandora's box? no bulky budgets? neither treason, tax-gatherers, attorneys, plagues, prisons, nor—petticoats?

*Sir S.* As to petticoats, they do not, now, furnish any *substantial* matter for complaint.

*Major C.* I must allow, our fair countrywomen are making hasty strides towards a state of primitive simplicity.

*Sir S.* Corruption was an early——

*Major C.* Oh, for God's sake, stop! or we shall have a system of sin and corruption, supported by an hundred historical deductions, sacred and profane, from the devil and the serpent, to the devil and the French revolution. Come, come, take the newspaper; we generally find something to entertain us in that. (*Gives a newspaper, which was upon the table.*)

*Sir S.* Entertain! (*Reading.*) "Yesterday died  
" Peter Plunder, Esq. of Peculation Park. By  
" arts, as low as his origin, and as vicious as his  
" heart; by various dark acts of extortion and  
" iniquity, he had amassed an enormous fortune.  
" He was, by birth, a Catholic, by interest, a  
" Protestant, and, by principle, of no religion at  
" all. The grossness of his manners, announced  
" the illiberality of his sentiments; and his melancholy was the strong picture of a disordered  
" mind. He was a domestic tyrant, and a public  
" peculator; in prosperity, insolent and unfeeling;  
" in adversity, downcast and depressed. On his  
" death-bed, he discovered marks of the deepest  
" remorse;

"remorse; the result, rather, of a guilty and coward conscience, than a religious and contrite heart. A Catholic priest, attended to administer consolation to him, in his last moments."—  
Humph!

*Major C.* Bad enough, to be sure.

*Sir S.* Ay, that strong cordial, absolution, I suppose; so he, who, when living, is wicked enough not to believe in God, is, when dying, weak enough to believe in man. Ah! man! man!

See him, proceeding with a prosperous breeze,  
And who so gay, so thoughtless, and profuse?  
With eager joy, he sets each swelling sail,  
While his frail bark, in safe and sober trim,  
Glides on the surface of a summer sea:  
But, when the storm and adverse gales arise,  
Fearful he views the troubled waves—yet still  
How vain is man—inflated, tyrant man,  
How weak, how base, how turbulent and proud!

*Enter RAGOT, in haste.*

*Rag.* Ah, Monsieur! dere be all de servants in the house in one uproar; all say dey will go away directly.

*Sir S. (Jumping up.)* You go away, you block-head.

*Enter several Servants, all speaking nearly at the same time; one saying, I will not live with Samuel; another, I will not live with James; another, And there's no staying in the house with the cook; another, I will not sleep this night under the same roof with Ragot; then, (the Dairy-maid,) The calves are all run mad; the cows are galloping after them; the hedge-hogs may milk them, for me, and the dairy go to the dogs, or the devil. All the Servants together, Pay me my wages directly!*

*Sir S.* Begone! begone! I never attend to these things.

*A Servant.* Attend you must, or I'll sue you at the next court, and you shall attend there.

*All together.* And I!

*Enter SUMMONS (a Tax-gatherer).*

*Summons.* Sir, I am come for the poor-rate, the land-tax, assessed taxes, income tax, and (introducing another person, who enters) here is Mr. Surcharge, the surveyor; he has surcharged you for your horses, carriages, and servants, and—  
(*Surcharge presents a paper to Sir Sober.*)

*Major C.* And, you see how necessary it is to reflect a little on sublunary things.

*Sir S.* How the devil shall I get rid of these plagues?

*Major C.* Pay them, pay them; for delay, be assured, is not in *their system*. Time, tide, and tax-gatherers, wait for no man.

*Enter SIRLOIN, in a fury, with a large bunch of keys.*

*Sirl.* Well! old Charon may be your cook, for me. I won't stay in your house a moment longer. Pay me my wages directly, and provide yourself, or I'll go to Justice Jumble, immediately. Turn away your French fortune-teller, or provide yourself.

*Sir S.* Take all I have, but out of my sight; you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

*Sirl.* Ashamed, indeed! I may say with Alderman Smuggler, in the play, "Ashamed! O Lord, Sir! I am an honest old woman, and never was ashamed of any thing." No, Sir—(assuming an affected, stately air.)

Sirloin



Sirloin can gain her bread, in any place,  
 And Sirloin, here, declares it to your face.  
 A scullion first, at fifteen years of age,  
 I wash'd the dishes, under Mrs. Sage:  
 And then, with Mrs. Housewife, liv'd at Dav'ntry,  
 And there, alone, was trusted in the pantry.  
 True to my place, my actions are above board,  
 Alike in kitchen, and alike in—cupboard.  
 By these bright symbols of my trust \*—by these,  
 Here Sirloin swears—you doubt?—then—take my  
 keys.

(Sirloin, *flings down the keys, in a violent manner.*)

Sir S. Mercy! mercy! I wish the turnkey of Newgate had hold of you.

Major C. Why, Sir Sober, you are only too angry to see these things with a philosophic, or even classical, eye. When the Romans promulgated the laws of the Twelve Tables, was not every thing enforced by gesture and pantomime? You should consider your cook as the divorced wife of those savage times, who always resigned her keys, the symbols of her authority; but whether she flung them down with such an air and grace, I leave to more able antiquaries to decide.

Sirl. Twelve tables! don't talk to me of your twelve tables—there are not twelve, in the whole house—and I wish the Romans had kept their tables half as clean as I keep mine. And I was born of honest parents, as well as you, and might have been as good a philosopher, had I chosen to live on pippins and potatoes; yes, my birth, and *genallagy* too, are well known in the three ridings of Yorkshire. I suppose, you think I had no father, though few men made more noise, in his time.

\* Holding up her keys.

Major

Major C. Come, give us a further account of your birth, and parentage.

Sirl. My father was—a trumpeter—at York  
 My mother liv'd, as cook-maid, at an inn,  
 The hero came, he saw, he, smiling, saw her,  
 Saw her, with *grease* peculiar, washing up  
 The dirty dishes, at the sink—while he,  
 Close by the fire, in silent rapture, stood,  
 And caught the amorous flame—he sigh'd, he  
 spoke—

Returning fondness,—blushing—the confest.  
 A close-cropt parson, tied the nuptial knot;—  
 Ere the tenth moon, a little one was born,  
 The child, the chopping child, thou now behold'st.

Sir S. I wish to God your head was *chopt off*!

Sirl. No, thank Heaven, *we* have no national chopping-blocks, no guillotines—chop off my head! No, none of your French cutlets, and cookery!—What! you think we are *publicans*, as in France, where they'd doff a Prince's head, as soon as Ned Nick, your groom, would dock a poney's tail. No, no, no! if I have a few superfluous hairs, on my chin, I don't want to be shaved by a national razor, not I—and, as I was telling your Ragot—No, said I, Lady Gadabout, I will *not* go to Dieppe; nor to any such pranks, or *publicans*; Old England, is good enough for me. None of your modern-built constitutions, which, like your modern-built contract-houses, tumble down, before they are half finished. Though I am no politician, I know too many cooks spoil the broth; and that, when the pot boils, the scum comes to the top. And a pretty hotchpotch these *publicans* have made, with their atheism, rights of man, and traps for man, and poor helpless, innocent, girls—like me. But you'll be ruined, there, before you'll be righted, with all your rights of man, li-



erty, quality, and no quality, either; but all quantity.

Rag. Ah! by Gar, now, you have reason, indeed!

Sirl. No, let them cook their trumpery at home, d'ye see. And they call'd me surly Sue, but what of that? I would not go to Dieppe—no, nor to Havre de Grace, either—I hope I have more grace.—No, my Lady, said I, may all the plagues of Ægypt, and curses of *Hobadiab*, be doubled on me, if I do—for, Madam, they say, the *Rigines*, now, don't comprehend their own language; it is a new dialect; instead of calling April, *April*; they call it *Germinal*; and how am I to understand German?—And November, is *Brumaire*,—a hair-broom, say I, to brush away all such foolish, flimsy stuff.—March, is *Venturise*—ay, depend upon it, such fellows will venture any thing, for their ends; but I won't venture to Dieppe, for all that, or to *Callus*, or among any such callous King-killers—to be squeezed to death, by a fraternal hug, the first Complementary Day—pretty compliments, indeed!

Rag. Oui—pretty compliment, in France, now.

Sirl. Yes, their compliments, now, consist in two words, liberty and equality—and a blow—

Rag. Ah! and, sometime, de words come before de blow, and, sometime, de blow before de word.

Sirl. No, says I, if I go to Dieppe, I suppose I must jumble on to *Rowen*, and, then, row on to Paris, and, then, jolt to *Dijohn*. No—all the Johns may die for me, first, and, I, a maid,—if that were possible—now—(aside) and so, perhaps, be obliged to make the grand tower, and return as much improved as after a seven year's apprenticeship, in the hold of a hulk. No, shut me up in the

the Tower, for a traitor, first.—And come back to *Versale*, and see every thing put up to *sale* there, and *Versale* converted into a bear-garden—and, then, to Paris again, to turn atheist and ambler, and go to the federation day, or botheration, or fooleration, I don't know what they style it.—No—I don't like such *newsang'd* jargon—*sang'd*, indeed! I'd rather dance a country dance, with the tigers in the Tower, and trust to their fangs.

Rag. Ah! by Gar, and I too!

Sirl. No, let me see law and justice, first, for their fangs and fandangos. No, I never cut such capers, my Lady, says I—I should not wonder if they marched me to the *Sham de Mar*, and made me a fundamental part of the new French constitution.—A shame to such shams, they deal too much in them. Thus, not a day passes but they are cooking their sham constitutions, and cramming their neighbours with them; serving them up, as they would three *curses* and a dessert.

Rag. Ah! by Gar, as they have *curses* enough, here, dey will have dere *desert*, hereafter.

Sirl. And, very likely, Madam, says I, they may make me dance to the trumpery tune of *Sarah! Sarah!* or the *Marfilly*, March-away Hymn. No; yet, if they come, we'll baste, we'll pommel, we've got a rod in pickle for them, here. But, if I go to Dieppe, they may make me represent Peace and Plenty, with roast beef, in one hand, and plum pudding, in the other. No, I've dressed a dinner for the first family in the kingdom, in my time, when I lived as cook, at Harford Bridge, and God bless them all, say I—and I know some of them, too, who don't show half as much pride, as many of your tossabout trollops, at a Windfor fair; or some of your fashionable folks, who are too high bred to be civil—ay, they'll strip me, and

turn me into the Goddess of Reason; you know they may, for nothing is too comical or *centric* for them; yes, and put me into a Pantheon; no, my Lady, I'd rather clean and polish your *pantheon*, and *register* too, and all in Brighton; or I might have been registered, long ago, among their murder'd millions, and put into a Pantheon, too—And so—

*Sir S.* And so, my Goddess of Reason, I'll send for a dozen constables and turn you out, all together.

*Sir.* Well, I'll go for the constable myself; we'll see; I am glad I did not go to Dieppe, faith, or I should have been paid my wages in minced *mandals*, or *preciated* petty-fogging *assignats*; and, instead of pence, in my pocket, have a pike in my pate; and be put into a prison, or a Pantheon, into the bargain. Now, you see, they want Galway, and all the girls away; Donegal, Portugal, Senegal, and any girl, and every girl, and won't leave an honest girl, if they can help it, in all the known world: so (turning to the other Servants,) I'll fetch the constable, and an attorney's letter, too. (Some say, A constable; others, An attorney's letter.—Summons and Surcharge, You must attend the Commissioners.)

[*Exeunt, all but Sir Sober System, Major Counterguard, and Ragot.*]

*Major C.* (Taking up a pencil, and some paper, and drawing some figures.)

*Sir S.* (Turning, and seeing him drawing.) What are you about?

*Major C.* Only drawing a sketch of the Systematic Philosopher, as an humble companion to the Enraged Musician, of our inimitable Hogarth.

*Sir S.* Zounds! how I am pester'd with fat cooks, idle footmen, and disastrous dairy-maids! Rather than be thus plagued, I would live in a lodging,

lodging, up two pair of stairs, not bigger than a beehive, or coalscuttle bonnet.

*Major C.* Sit down, you see I am a true Englishman, and can not, easily, quit my beef and bottle. Come, Eliza, in a bumper.

*Sir S.* (Sitting down.) I don't deal in toasts, now.

*Major C.* Yes, in toasts—and water; and that's the reason you were so cool and composed, just now.

*Sir S.* Wine, is not, I say, in my system.

*Major C.* Neither is anger; but the cook, or the cat, can put your philosophy to flight, at any time. Come, though your constitution seems as cold as your half-consumed cauliflower, I'll take two to one you commit matrimony within the year 1800, and sit president, at another jovial meeting, at the Shakespeare; remember "Benedick, the married man."

*Sir S.* Pshaw! he was a vain, talkative, truant, and no philosopher; but, when I do, the Royal George shall be taken by a bumboat, and Gibraltar, by a pop-gun; and you may compose my epithalamium, in doggerel verse, and set it to music, to the tune of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, to be sung, or said, at the corner of every street.

*Enter CHARLOTTE and ELIZA—Sir Sober System seems confused, looking at the door and windows, to see if he can escape, but Eliza and Charlotte stand near the door.*

*Major C.* (Running to Charlotte, and taking her by the hand.) Welcome home, and you, Miss Allworthy, welcome; we have been talking of, and toasting you—

*Eliza.*



*Eliza.* (To Sir Sober, who seems fixed and lost in admiration.) Be assur'd, while under your roof, I shall be sorry to interrupt your systems, pursuits, pleasures, or even pains, which seem to be the result of feelings I so highly approve of; I am something of a philosopher myself; I love to walk in the silent grove, by day, and view the phases of the moon, and stars, by night. I can say, with a great man, "Never less alone, than when alone."

On things beyond our reach, on what is past,  
I moralize and muse; on things to come,  
Doubt and deliberate; from the wayward world,  
Safe and secluded, in the covert grove  
I wander and I walk, or, silent, sit;  
And, with some sage of Athens, or of Rome,  
In strictest ties associate, till each shade,  
Lengthen'd and lost, reminds me that this life,  
An unsubstantial shadow as it is,  
Runs, like the sand-glass, in its hour away.—

*Sir S. (Aside.)* Good God! and is this a woman?

*Eliza.* Man and marriage, I detest and defy—society, (cohabitation) is not in my system.

*Sir S. (Eagerly.)* And have you a system too?

*Eliza.* Yes, and here is an abbreviation—man, a monkey and a rogue—woman, a trisler, a trouble, and a tattler—society, noise and nonsense—London, the sink of sin, calumny, and corruption—a friend, a rival and our ruin—solitude, best society—wine, liquid fire—meat, the nourishment of carrion crows, and beasts of prey—enemies, all we see, or who see us—philosophy, and a system, the only road to happiness.

*Sir S.* By Heaven! much of my own system—happy am I to have my sentiments confirmed by such an able and eloquent ally: we will be—friends; in your sex, man need not dread a rival; you will never marry, nor will I; you hate man, so do I; my study, house, heart—all then, may be

safely opened to you—yes, we, without danger, may be—friends.

*Char. (Aside to Major C.)* Now, I dare say, some pretty, Platonic plan, is brewing in his systematic noddle.

*Major C. (Aside to Charlotte.)* Could Plato, himself, have remained at the freezing point of friendship, with such a woman?

*Sir S.* Yes, we may, occasionally, meet, but society, cohabitation, you know, is not in our system.

*Eliza.* But I will not detain you, from your philosophic pursuits.

*Sir S. (Aside.)* What am I about?—we may more easily avoid some evils, than subdue them. Yes, I will go to my philosophic pursuits.

[Exit, hastily; but looking earnestly at Eliza. Ragot follows.]

*Char.* There's a way of taking leave—what an ungain, ungallant gander, my good brother is!

*Eliza.* No! Only the extreme of Spanish politeness; he means to say to me, "I leave you mistress of the house"; no ceremony, no obliging you to go out first, lest you should purloin something. He shall serenade me, in the Spanish fashion, ere the week has passed.

*Char.* Well, you have a happy way of turning every thing to your own advantage.

*Eliza.* Nothing like fighting people with their own weapons. You should talk to every one in an appropriate language.

*Major C.* Never fear, we shall have him yet, though he did move off—like a frightened hare from her form.

*Eliz.* Or a ghost, at the smell of the morning air.

*Char.*

*Char.* Yes, and like a stricken deer, if I mistake not.

*Eliza.* (To Major C.) You see I began by seizing his own batteries, and turning them against himself.

*Major C.* You may trust to your own artillery; or can, at any time, spring a mine, and blow his sad and solitary systems into the air.

*Eliza.* Now I have made my landing good, I must contrive to clear the outposts of those lurking enemies, sown and severity, with the light troops.

*Major C.* No one commands a better corps of sharp-shooters; lively wit, true humour, and grave irony form but a part of your battalion of riflemen.

*Eliza.* And, if I want any reinforcements, I will borrow the attornies' corps, for they have been, for a long time, signalized as the most expert "riflemen" of the age; but I trust we shall not want their assistance till the last, till the garrison surrenders, or at least has beaten a parley.

*Char.* Then, I suppose, they must be called in, to draw up the articles of capitulation, in due order; we must have stamps, seals, signatures, dates and deliveries; but I hope you know, that, with these gentlemen, you must pay a long bill for a short parley.

*Eliz.* Yes, every body, who knows them, knows that.

*Enter RAGOT, (crossing the Stage.)*

*Char.* Well, what has brought you back?

*Rag.* My master send me for his large telescope.

*Char.* Why, he has more telescopes than I have curl-papers, or band-boxes.

*Major C.* Yes, they are like a park of artillery, or

or the Warren, at Woolwich; he has them, from a grass-hopper, to a two and thirty pounder.

*[Exit Ragot.]*  
*Char.* (To Major C.) We shall enlist you in our tea party.

*Major C.* How could I enlist in a pleasanter party?

*Eliza.* So, you are promoted to a Majority, and are soon to join your regiment, abroad?

*Char.* We will not talk of that, now, for the very thought is a thorn in my breast.

*Eliza.* No, the Major is too gallant to plant a thorn there, much less to let it rankle and remain.

### SONG—by Major COUNTERGUARD.

What! plant a thorn within that breast,  
That breast, the seat of love,  
What! Heaven! disturb my Charlotte's rest,  
And Henry cruel prove!

No, hear this truth, this tender truth,  
(And to thy heart 't is known);  
Sooner he'd plant, in prime of youth,  
A dagger in his own.

*Eliza.* Come! come! I thank you for your song, but I'll have no storming or stabbing—so, to tea, to tea! *[Exit.]*

### SCENE II.

*Sir SOBER SYSTEM, thoughtful; and walking slowly.*

*SCENE—The Garden.*

*Sir S.* If, with all the beauty of Eliza, a familiarity of system and sentiment should really prevail,—yes, we might, then, live together—by system—not as a modern, matrimonial pair; but, by system,

I

and



and read the dialogues of Plato—Platonism, is, undoubtedly, included in my system—if—

*Rag.* (Putting out his head from behind a tree.)  
"Plato, thou reasonest well."

*Sir S.* If not, in so many words, in so many syllables—or, if not in so many syllables, yet, in so many letters; and how could I have studied Plato so deeply and duly, and not found out that, before? Yes, Peter—phaw! Pe—phaw! phaw! "Plato, thou reasonest well, else why this longing after"—What?

*Rag.* (Again.) Yes—"Plato, thou reasonest well," but me shall soon see if my master is longing after *mortalité*, or *immortalité*: Yet *Monf. Peter* against *Monf. Plato*, two to von—by gar—

*Sir S.* (Striking his breast.) "Rest; rest, perturbed spirit."

Man's passions slumber, but they do not sleep—  
Sound an alarm, alert, they fly to arms;  
Nor yield they, soon, to stratagem, or strength.  
Subdu'd, these rebels rally and return  
Fresh to the charge, and fresh destruction make—  
Strong in their birth, they tempt their eagle flight,  
Prepar'd, or sound, or sense, or self to fight.  
All friendly counsel mock they, or despise,  
As fact, or fancy, fatal fuel plies—  
Careless of future good, or present pains,  
Nor respite know, while tepid life remains.

[Exit.

END OF ACT III.

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.

*An Eminence, in the Park; a Wood, at a distance, in the East. The heavens, at the break of day, represented. Sir SOBER SYSTEM, with a telescope, looking at the stars.*

*Sir Sober.*

HEAVEN! what a glorious sight! Yet half the world,

In mimic death, and transitory dreams,  
Still slumbering, waste their fleeting hours away.  
See Venus shines, reflected, in the East;  
Venus, the certain harbinger of day.  
Now the sun's rays, refracted, widely spread  
Their orient beams, upon our parent earth.  
Now fades the twinkling of each minor star—  
Ah! pale, and yet more pale, ye grow; perhaps,  
Still bright, still glorious to your proper spheres.

(*ELIZA enters, unseen by Sir Sober.*)

Now joyous landscapes rise, and fancied forms;  
Enchanting pictures float amidst the clouds,  
Of damask some, and some of azure blue.  
Impurpled with the blushes of the morn,  
In dazzling drapery deck'd, the gilded sky  
Its gayest garb assumes, of various hues.  
All nature smiles, complacency serene,  
In sweetest verdure cloth'd; the sighing gales  
Breathe gently, and each infant, babbling brook,  
Flows, in harmonious consonance, to tempt  
The mind, contemplative, to serious thought.

(*Sir Sober seems lost in meditation.*)

*Eliza. (Aside.)* Why not, to be brief, quote Hudibras, and, in few words, instruct us by the simile of the lobster, turning from black to red? Now we have only to suppose ourselves in London, in the midst of winter, at four o'clock in the afternoon, and, then, we might say,

All Bond Street bustles, noise and dirt divine,  
Pall-mall, St. James's, Piccadilly too;  
In gayest drapery deck'd, coach chases coach;  
While beau, encountering belle, and belle, the beau,  
Meet, in harmonious consonance—to tempt,

But here, I believe, I must stop—

*(Now the sun begins to rise magnificently.)*

*Sir S.* But see the God of day! first his curv'd edge,  
Fixes the thoughtful and attentive mind;  
Yet, still, his long-expected rays, at once  
Puzzle the eyeballs, and perplex the sight.  
Now half his fiery orb appears—Ah! more,  
He still increases, and arrests the soul—  
Now, extricated from yon glimmering wood,  
He shows his broad, benign, and blushing face,  
In glorious, golden majesty, arrayed;  
Still, as he rises 'bove his eastern hill,  
The particles of light diffuse, and travelling,  
Than thought, ten thousand, thousand times more  
fleet,  
Rouse up the western labourer from his bed—  
Fix'd to the ground, I seem; yet the full eye,  
Obscur'd and wet with tears, must seek relief,  
From the bright luminary.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* Ay, in Bond Street, we might  
see many a bright luminary—many a Mars, and  
Venus, attractive and erratic too.—

*Sir S.* Yet once more, once,  
Let me, with mortal eye, and mortal sense,  
Seek thee, immortal; turn, ah! once more, turn,  
Admiring thy beneficence, O God!

In

In praise, in gratitude; and wonder lost.  
Can man's imagination e'er conceive  
Myriads of suns, and myriads more of worlds,  
In one, resistless, infinite expanse,  
Rapid in motion, yet in motion calm,  
Rolling, harmonious, through th' ethereal plain?  
Can he? Yet doubt *one* God, *one* only power,  
Omniscient, omnipresent, great and good:  
*Two*, might have marr'd the unison of all.  
What wanton, wild confusion had they made;  
World, jostling world, in dreadful, dire array;  
Islands and continents asunder torn;  
All symmetry, all harmony had fail'd;  
And that *connexion*, which the thoughtful mind  
Views as conviction, causes and effects,  
Which rise in judgment 'gainst the Atheist's rules,  
All, all might, then, have fail'd, and doubt remain'd.—  
Yet, still, some mist, man's piercing eye obscures;  
Still sage philosophy, still reason fails;  
Still darkness intercepts all human view—  
WHAT the *hereafter*, still eludes our search.

*Eliz.* Well now, shall I "*intercept his view*" or  
not? No, as he does not profess atheistical philo-  
sophy, and I do not represent the Goddess of Rea-  
son, I will not; besides, he has not finish'd yet.

*Sir S. (Kneeling.)* O God! thy will, thy will divine,  
reveal!

And soften, THOU! this stubborn heart of steel,  
Show me the path, the broad, the sacred way;  
My faults correct, my wandering footsteps stay,  
Omnipotent!—enforce thy wise decree;  
Teach me to honour, love, and follow thee.  
But spare; O! spare! a wretched mortal's sin,  
Cleanse thou my heart, and every thought within.  
Inspire my soul! O! teach me how to live,  
And, dying, praise to Thee, to Thee, MY GOD, to give.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* This is a man of sound sense,  
heart, and religion,—a poet, too; soon shall the  
melancholy marks of meditation, erased from his  
brow,



brow, be converted into the sparkling smiles of love; and, ere the sun is an hour high, he shall present me with a "ballad, made to his mistress' eyebrow!"

*Sir S. (Turning, and seeing Eliza, starts, exclaiming) What do I see? (a vision descending from heaven!*

*Eliza.* No, nor a ghost retreating from earth; but a mere mortal, inhaling a little morning air, and, though happy to meet Sir Sober, sorry to interrupt his meditations, and turn them, from divine, to human, objects.

*Sir S.* By heaven! such an object cannot be merely human.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* That was a fair trap, and has fairly taken—Victory! the talisman is broken—again.—You astronomers, must have infinite pleasure in extricating the senses from corporeal objects, and contemplating the works of the Creator. I have, often, envied you; but, above all things, I should rejoice to hear the music of the spheres—though, they say, it is not to be distinguished by mortal ears.

*Sir S. (Warmly.)* But an angel!

*Eliza. (Aside.)* I have him. Such a compliment, with a particle of gallantry, in his composition, was too obvious.—Once more. What was that star which preceded the day, and seemed, for a time, to defy the sun himself?

*Sir S.* That was Venus.

*Eliza.* Poor Venus! she must be much mortified to have her beauty thus eclipsed!

*Sir S.* Yes! and by an object so much more divine.

*Eliza. (Aside.)* Ay! he comes on nobly! There's no star called Adonis, is there?

*Sir*

*Sir S.* Not that I know of, in either hemisphere.

*Eliza.* Was not that cruel, in the ancient astronomers, not to give Venus a deserving associate? Yet, perhaps, you think her more happy and independent, when single. But there is no such thing as independence, in this, or in the globes we see around us—worlds, are balanced by worlds, and, like the connexion of all human creatures, and all human societies, some must be great, and some small, each being necessary to the existence and harmony of the whole, receiving and imparting mutual aid, supporting and supported, limiting and limited, dependant and depending on, one another; and, believe me, those who assert the contrary, in any system, must begin by deceiving simpletons, and themselves; and end by destroying nature and society.

*Sir S. (Aside.)* My senses are confused! (*To Eliza.*) But, were I to change my opinions, should I not be deemed visionary and versatile?

*Eliza.* You will only be yourself again.—No man, who, *honestly*, revokes false opinions, or false principles, can be culpable in the eyes of God, or man—nothing more subject to doubt, disease, and decay, than opinion. Besides, wisdom is, sometimes, most wise when most versatile; and, she, like Nature herself, appears most changeable, when most steady.

*Sir S.* Should I abjure my system of solitude and independence?

*Eliza.* Why, through life, the present is little less than a commentary and criticism on the past—Nay, corruption and regeneration, seem to be a necessary part of the system of the universe.

The air we live to breathe, and breathe to live,  
Acts as the great corrupter; and the earth,

From

From which our forms are fashion'd, in her turn,  
Again demands her dust—for, dust we are,  
And must to dust—an awful truth—return.  
The sun himself's a parricide, the leaves,  
The fruits, the flowers, his potent beams produce,  
His potent beams destroy; and man himself,  
Lives but to die, and dies, again to live.

*Sir S. (Aside.)* By Heaven! I stagger, I am lost!

*Eliza.* But you, no doubt, are better acquainted with these things, than I am. They, surely, are a part of your system. You must know the power of attraction, at least.

*Sir S. (With gravity.)* Yes, I know it.

*Eliza.* And are you sure you do not feel it? *(Walking about, during which time Sir S. Sober follows her, eagerly, with his eyes.)* There's attraction! Why, your eyes are as fixed and true, as the needle to the pole. There, now I have proved to you, what Newton never thought of, that woman is an attractive loadstone, and man an obedient needle; and that we can draw, influence, fix and fasten him, as we please; and all this, by what I call, in my system, a physical necessity, at the moment of his birth. But, I am told, you were, once, in love.

*Sir S.* Lown it—once had I a passion, a gay and guilty one. In guilt it began, and with guilt it was repaid.

*Eliza.* Yes! yes! you were rewarded in your own corrupted coin. These ladies, generally know better how to pay in kind, than in kindness. Yet, I dare say, she swore to love you as long as she lived.

*Sir S.* Yes, and to live only as long as she loved.

*Eliza.* I can guess the rest. You have been generous,

generous, and deceived; but let not that contract your heart: you have formed a system, and will, I see, break it; but, a plan above reason, and the laws of nature, is dissolved by Reason and Nature; so, let these two ladies adjust that matter between them—you stand acquitted;—but you are candid.

*Sir S.* I will be more so. Long, long, has this heart, this wounded heart, silently panted after a partner and partaker of its feelings, and fondness; an accomplished woman, of sense, virtue, sentiment, and sensibility. Often have I heard you were every thing the liveliest imagination could paint; but, till last night, treated that fair report as foolish and fabulous. My system, was, then, shaken to its centre; it is, now, shattered to atoms—but my system always had a reserve.

*Eliza.* I suppose a reserve—yes, a fold in the system; a corner, for the sex. Man may as well attempt to exclude us from a part in a plot, as a place in his heart. But love at first sight! in a philosopher too! impossible!

*Sir S.* Not only possible, but true!

*Eliza.* But I may be engaged. Lord! I have had an hundred admirers. I have a train, in Town, as long as the train of the great comet; always a beau, of each species, in waiting: first, I have a fool to laugh at—that, you know, is easily had: then, a coxcomb, to dangle with—(that animal is not difficult to find, either), and to call my carriage; besides a variety of fashionable flycatchers, because they—*are* fashionable; made more for pages to hold my train, for a day, than partners, to hold my heart, for life. If I marry, I will marry a man of sense, honour, and sentiment, one who can govern himself; and—will not attempt to govern



govern me: and, if not with philosophy enough to conquer his passions, with discernment to direct them to their proper object—myself.

*Sir S.* What is more worthy of adoration, than perfection? (*Falling at her feet.*)

*Eliza.* I would rather you paid me that compliment ten years hence; but rise, my fond philosopher, and recollect you are not only declaring yourself my admirer, but the accomplished man, I have just described.

*Sir S.* I acknowledge myself presumptuous, even when kneeling at your feet. (*Rises.*)

*Eliza.* Yes, yes, I know your sex well; you act humility, when you feel confidence; profess the most, when you experience the least: and kneel, with seeming submission, when you expect to be exalted to the highest posts of honour.

*Sir S.* Whatever my expectations, never did I hope to find such a woman as yourself. (*Attempting to take her hand.*)

*Eliza.* To find! why, you have found me, before I was lost. Stop a little; recollect, I am not your property, yet... What! as lord of the manor, you mean to take me, under the description of treasure-trove; but, remember, I am living flesh and blood, and not buried gold or silver—or put me into the pound, with the vagrant cattle—or secure me, as an estray colt. But, if one of the King's sheep cannot be claimed, as an estray, surely one of his subjects cannot.

*Enter Major COUNTERGUARD, and CHARLOTTE—*

*Sir Sober, when he sees them, seems confused.*

*Major C. (To Charlotte.)* I saw him, at her feet. (*To Sir Sober.*) Ay, ay, you have discovered a

new planet. You philosophers, are the most fortunate men in the world; you converse with divine objects, taking a wide range through ether, to the empyreal sphere, to the heaven of heavens, while we are confined to mother earth, and mortal sense. Was this conjunction of planets, according to the system of chance and necessity, or liberty and free agency?

*Eliza. (To Charlotte, aside.)* We must let down your brother, the balloon philosopher, gently, from his aerial system.

*Char. (Aside.)* Yes, for he has a great deal of gas yet, I believe.

*Major C. (To Sir Sober.)* Why, you are silent this morning.

*Sir S.* Better be wisely silent, than foolishly loquacious.

*Major C.* Sir Minor Witling, says, gravity is no sign of sense.

*Sir S.* Remind him, that vivacity is no proof of wit: he may be “Sir Oracle” in his own sphere, and Sir Owl out of it.

*Major C. (Laughing at Sir Sober, and imitating him, kneeling.)* Shall I tell you the morning news?—It is currently reported, you are turned Catholic; that you rise at matins, and confess your faults; some say, you do not forget the fair Eliza, in your orisons; others, that she is your auricular confessor; and that, after an ample detail of all your sins, against Hymen, grace, and gallantry, she has promised you final absolution.

*Char.* Why, you look so grave and grievous, one would imagine you had been anathematized and excommunicated, instead of being received a catechumen, with hopes of initiation, into the holy community of Benedicks. Well! though your body

body may remain in chains; I will give you something for a mass, to pray your soul out of purgatory.

*Major C.* If we were to rescue him from the depth of love, I do not believe he would, willingly, pay much for salvage.

*Sir S. (Aside.)* I see I am detected.

*Char.* Why, here is Eliza, waiting for you to attend her to breakfast.

*Eliza.* Yes, yes; he has promised to drink coffee with us this morning. Come, come, to breakfast! to breakfast! [Exit.]

## SCENE II.

*A Wood; CHARLOTTE, sitting, under a tree. Enter Major COUNTERGUARD musing, and not perceiving her.*

*Major C.* Shall I, or shall I not, solicit her to accompany me? Yes, I will; yet a long and tempestuous voyage!

Since woman, dear woman, and love, can impart,  
Each spring, and each balm, and each bliss to the heart,

And since she can breathe fragrance on each little flower,

Which blows in life's garden, yet fades ere the hour;

Since she, only she, can each sorrow remove;

Ah! why thorns lie conceal'd, 'midst the blossoms of love?

*Char. (Coming out, while he is repeating the above)*  
*sings—*

Since fate calls thee hence, ah! let Charlotte pursue,  
That fate; and thy fortune, or truant or true;

The boisterous, broad-bosom'd ocean explore,  
While rudely the blast and the billows shall roar.

And

And since woman, 'tis woman alone, can impart  
Each spring and each balm, and each bliss to the heart,

And since she can breathe fragrance on each little flower

Which blows in life's garden, yet fades ere the hour,

Take this hand—it is thine—and shall, gently, remove,

Each sharp-pointed thorn from the blossoms of love!

[Exit.]

## SCENE III.

*The Kitchen. SIRLOIN and RAGOT. Bell rings violently.*

*Rag.* Ah! by Gar, it is plain my master is mad!

*Sirl.* Mad by you fool! he has only stumbled into love—like Corporal Trim, in a fessera—

Why, he looks as if he had got St. Vitus's dance;

or had been bitten by a tarantula; and 't is Miss's

music alone, which can cure his madness, I be-

lieve. *(Bell rings again.)*

*Sir S. (Calling, loudly, from within.)* Breakfast!

breakfast!—haste—tea, coffee, chocolate, fruits,

flowers! every thing which nature can supply, or

art invent!

*Sirl.* Come, haste, you skipper.

[Exit Ragot, driven out by Sirlain.

*Sirl.* Ay, Miss has the money, and I shall not

better myself, therefore I'll e'en go and *pologize*,

and take my keys again: a new-married couple,

have no time to attend to their family, so I will

manage it, to their interest—and, it will be the

first time in my life, if I am fool enough to forget

my own. That will be preferable to going to a

new place, or to—Dieppe, either. [Exit.]

SCENE



## SCENE IV.

*Breakfast-room.* ELIZA, CHARLOTTE, Major COUNTERGUARD—Sir SOBER SYSTEM, better dressed, and appearing cheerful.

Char. (To Sir Sober.) I am glad to see you have exchanged your strait waistcoat, for a striped one.

Major C. Why, you look as awkward, and unlike a man of this world, as one of the sound sleepers of Ephesus, just risen from a noble and noiseless nap, of I know not how many years.

Eliza. And, before you have any breakfast, I insist that you put on this, and swallow these pills, (taking out some pills, and a mask.) The pills, are all gilt, and contain an abbreviation of your satires and system. They will cost you nothing, but a few wry faces. Come, come, you may do the deed first, and confide in your own assurance and ingenuity, for the defence of it, afterwards.

Sir S. Are you, really, in earnest?

Eliza. Really; and, if you hesitate, I will have your whole system copied out, and converted into a fool's cap, and you shall wear that.

Major C. But why the mask?

Eliza. I insist on the mask, as a necessary part of the paraphernalia. (Putting on the mask, which nearly falls off.) Stop a little! stop a little! Well! (taking one of the pills,) first, here is that little song, "Woman's affections quickly veer." This is made as biting and bitter as possible; and, positively, shall be taken, as a preliminary to peace. (Sir Sober swallows it.) Then, come the gross parts of your system, ugly, cumbersome, and wrapt up in a leaf of Lord Chesterfield's Letters, to promote digestion. Come. (Sir Sober takes that

with

with difficulty.) Well! now, all will be easy. Next is your confisgency; that, you see, is not very bulky, and is gilt; so. (Sir Sober swallows it.) To conclude, here is your conscience, which, you may observe, is small indeed; and doubly gilt. (Sir Sober swallows it.) It does not even stick in his throat—gone, in a moment—no choking!

Char. Why, you have not offered one excuse for yourself.

Sir S. (Pointing to Eliza.) Have I not a living witness in court, pleading for me? And, indeed, if such pills would choke, or poison, a fine addition would be made, annually, to the bills of mortality. And, pray, is it not better to live, by eating our words, than starve, by eating our nails? Nay, it is surprising to see how fat and sleek people look, on such a regimen.

Char. Yet this regimen has, often, been known to alter a person's face most confoundedly.

Eliza. Ay, faith, and the face of his friends, too.

Major C. Methinks, then, it must be a dangerous diet; for it will make a man turn red, green, and, in some cases, quite blue.

Sir S. After all, words are but sound, and seldom sense; therefore, he who swallows words, does not, necessarily, swallow wisdom. You make a great piece of work, indeed, about a man eating his words; why, in London, where every species of ingenuity is exercised for an existence, some live by their monstrous craws, some by their monstrous consciences; some, by a scrape of a fiddle, some, by a scramble at a faro-table. Many feed the empty vanity of their patrons, that they may feed their own empty stomachs. Some live by lectures on heads, some, by lectures on humanity; the

the propagation of anarchy and atheism; tacit obedience, and invariable opposition: some, by the lightness of their heels; some, by the hardness of their hearts; some, by the ruin and prostitution of others; some, by the prostitution of themselves.

*Eliza.* Why, you are not quite ignorant of the world, I feel.

*Sir S.* I know, we have not only professional stone-eaters, but professional word-eaters; word-catchers, word-clippers, word-coiners, and common utterers, *malv animo*, knowing them to be base and counterfeit; word-eaters, now, all over the kingdom, are as numerous as resurrection-men, in Town; common informers or common prostitutes; coiners, lumpers, mud-larks, or morocco-men.

*Char.* Let word-eating thrive, say I; for what traffic brings a quicker, or more certain, return?

*Sir S.* None; and you may, yourself, furnish the raw materials; work them up into sentences; arrange them in the brains or books, and they become, immediately, articles of commerce! Though not money, they represent money; they are productive and reproductive; productive, in the form of a pamphlet or oration; and reproductive, in the shape of a job, or a contract. They are, always, vendible, in London, or Westminster, for real, or personal; long, or short, annuities. They are current at the Bank, and the India House, and may be converted into ready rupees, or less ready reversions; bonds, lottery tickets, 3 per cent. omnium, or scrip.

*Char.* After all, then, this dissertation on word-eating seems very immaterial; for I know of but two substances, material and immaterial; words, certainly, are not of the material kind; then they, as certainly, must be of the immaterial, which is

as

as plain as "what is not prose, is verse; and what is not verse is prose."

*Eliza.* Ay, ay; you see what a noise is often made about nothing.

*Sir S.* Yes, absolutely nothing; for words are not things; as money is not riches, but only the sign of riches. Thus, he who eats words, words not being things, eats nothing; and, as nothing can come from nothing, no disgrace can come from eating words.

*Eliza.* Here, too, is the old assertion, *that words are irrevocable*, falsified, for, they cannot only be recalled, but, by a simple and well-known process, recoined, restamped, reburnished, and, mixed with a due proportion of alloy, returned into circulation, at the medium price of the day.

*Char.* After all, then, this is a mere verbal dispute, and has produced a great deal of volubility about nothing. (*Sir Sober's mask falls off.*)

*Sir S.* So, then, your laugh will end, as many laughs begin, in nothing.

*Eliza.* I, however, may laugh by prescriptive right; for, those who administer the dose, are, always, the first to smile at the effects of their own medicine.

*Major C.* Word-eating, may be nothing; but prefix the letter *s*, and it would be the devil to digest; it would become a republican ragout indeed—it would be *sword-eating*.

*Eliza.* That ragout, honest John Bull, I am sure, never will have to swallow.

*Major C.* God forbid! for I am convinced he never could digest it. Now it is come to this; we are all concerned; every person, who has a hand, lest it should be chained; a heart, lest it should

be



be corrupted; and a guinea, lest it should be plundered; so—I will sing you a song.

## S. O N G.

While peace is submission, and friendship is death,  
Rather risk our last pound, and resign our last breath.  
Spite of arms, spite of arts, we ne'er can be slaves,  
While GEORGE rules the land, and Britannia the waves.

Sir S. Well! well! we will discuss the subject of peace and war, when a more favourable opportunity occurs.—However, I am glad this word-eating business has ended in a song.

Eliza. Yet it begins, and ends too, frequently, like a *dante*, and nothing more plain or practicable than the figure: it may be rehearsed in the morning, and performed in the evening; first, *balance*—then, join hands—cast off—cross over—change sides—figure in—follow the leader—right hand and left.

Enter SIRLOIN, swallowing something.

Sirl. All gone! all gone! I've swallowed the warning I gave; so, Sir, (*pointing to her throat*), here's my *pology*. I'll swear never to behave so again; and I thought I could not come more apropos—for you have scarcely had time to digest your *own* breakfast, yet.

Sir S. Ay! she will swear too. In these days, nothing is to be done, in France, without a dose of atheism; in England, without a dozen of oaths—judge of us by our oaths, and we are the most religious and orthodox nation in the world.

(RAGOT crosses the stage, playing, and singing.)

Char. Well! let us have the fatted calf killed.

Major C. And I will bid our neighbours to the feast,

feast, and take care to moisten the Baronet's clay with some of the best Burgundy in the cellar. This night, the house shall be rebaptized, and, instead of Philosopher's, shall be known by the name of Fuddler's Hall. [Exeunt.]

## END OF ACT IV.

## ACT V.

## SCENE I.

*An elegant Temple, in the Garden, adorned with flowers, as are, also, the borders; the trees, are lighted with lamps.—Sir SOBER SYSTEM, Major COUNTER-GUARD, and other Company, after supper. Somebody is heard singing—*

“One bottle more, one bottle more,  
And a wipe of shelelah brings—twelve bottles more.”

*Sir Sober.*

AY, ay; bring twelve—twelve bottles more.

*Major C.* Come, this is a bumper—Eliza Allworthy.

*Sir S.* With all my heart—a bumper. (*Sir Sober gets up, and staggers.*)

*Major C.* If he ever, again, relapses, exchanging beauty and Burgundy, for systems and sadness, I am no true Englishman. (*To Sir Sober.*) I have often heard you run on, for half an hour, in your deadly definitions of man—What is your definition, now? animated with a bottle or two of generous wine?

*Sir S. (Staggering.)* Why man—man is a staggering animal—man is a boo—booz—boozing animal—man is a wine-bib—bibbing—animal—a punch-making animal—a cork-drawing animal.

*Major C.* And, you will soon find, I trust, an indenture-drawing animal. (*Imitating Sir Sober's manner.*)

*Sir S.* Man is a hic—hic—hiccoughing animal; a system-making animal.

*Major C.* Ay, and system-breaking animal; so, no more definitions, but sit down again, for we are going to have a dance.

*Enter several People (Men and Women) clad as rustics, with chaplets of roses, &c. They sing, and dance, and crown Sir Sober.*

## SONG.

*1st Rustic (female).*

Here, within this arching bower,  
Sweet vies with sweet, and flower with flower.  
Here, the gay enamell'd ground  
Laughs, and spreads its fragrance round.

*2d Rustic (female).*

Wear, within this glad some grove,  
Crowns of myrtle, crowns of love.  
Cupid, beating time, advance,  
And join in mirth, in glee, and dance.

*3d Rustic (female).*

Weav'd the chaplet was this morn,  
Let it on thy brow be worn;  
Myrtle leaves here Venus bring;  
And, in the rosy goblet, fling.

*4th Rustic (female).*

Let the roving eglantine,  
With the mossy rose entwine:  
While, in the woods, the turtle doves,  
Murmur forth their artless loves.



*Blind I, but not blind!*  
 Blend, with his, Eliza's name;  
 Add fuel to the generous flame.  
 Blend their names, and blend their fate,  
 Banish sorrow, care and hate.

*Several Country-people bring in a cask, on their shoulders.*

*1st Countryman.* Zookers, we've emptied *un*.

*2d Countryman.* Ay, and can *vinish* a zecond, too.

*Major C.* Come, but let us first mount the Baronet on Bacchus's tun, before Eliza arrives, to grace the festival; and we will have an Anacreontic. *(They place Sir Sober, astride, on the tun, and carry him about, singing.)*

*Enter a Servant (giving a letter to Sir Sober).*

*Sir S.* From Eliza! *(Reads.)* "My father is ill, I am going to town, but shall see you again soon." *(Jumping off the cask.)* Yes! soon shall it be.—Hollo! Samuel, Ragot; run, ride, fly—order me a chaise and four—six, fourteen horses, directly—to London! to London!

*Major C.* *(Taking hold of Sir Sober's arm.)* What think you of my philosopher, and his systems, now? *[Exeunt.]*

## SCENE II.

*A Room in Allworthy's House, in London.* ALL-WORTHY and ELIZA.

*Allw.* No, thank God, only a little return of my whimsical vertigo, in the head. I did not think the housekeeper would have sent for you; but, my dear daughter, I feel ten years younger, since you told me the result of your excursion to Green-wood.

wood. You know, it was my ambition to see you married to a man of sense and character.

*Eliza.* Happy am I to have your approbation, my dear father.

*Allw.* You have it, indeed! and we shall soon see the Baronet flying up to town, on the wings of love, or I would not give a farthing for him.

*Enter CHARLOTTE.*

*Char.* Ay, and the first stage, on Bacchus's tun—but I will not tell tales.

*Enter Sir SOBER, in an elegant morning dress, and*

*Major COUNTERGUARD.*

*Major C.* Here are we in Town, thanks to some capital cattle, and brisk boys. *(He takes Charlotte by the hand; Allworthy, welcomes Sir Sober.)*

*Allw.* Sir Sober, I rejoice to meet you on an occasion so interesting to my happiness, and heart. I have long known your real worth: I esteemed your father, as a man and gentleman. Eliza is yours; I give you a daughter, the amiable representative of an amiable mother, who was every thing that mildness, worth, virtue, or resignation, could make her. I give you a daughter, my heart loves, my hand raised, and my reason approves of. I bestow her, untainted in mind, manners, or estate; with every advantage of nature and education; with an adequate portion of sense, affection, fortune, principles, and—petticoats—for the present fashion.

*Sir S.* How shall I repay your kindness?

*Allw.* By kindness to my daughter. While I exist, half my fortune is yours; when I die, all. May you, both, and your posterity enjoy it. May you live

live in mutual love, candour, confidence, and esteem.

*Eliza. (Embracing her father.)* You have ever, ever, been, to me, the most indulgent and affectionate of fathers!

*Allw. (Embracing his daughter.)* And I have ever found you amiable, and deserving of all my fond heart could wish;—which was, always, more than my most forcible efforts could bestow. *(To Sir Sober.)* My seat in Parliament, I readily resign—a hot house, and cool debates, do not suit me; I have done my duty honestly, uninfluenced, unawed,—and—unrewarded. I have neither been the tool of power, nor party: I have persevered, in every season, and every session, in the duty I owed my King, my country, the constitution—and—excuse an old-fashioned man—my conscience: I know your principles, and need not say, “Go thou, and do likewise.” You may, I am sure, dare act according to your feelings.

*Major C. (Taking hold of Sir Sober, and in a loud whisper.)* And, I hope, at the end of your political campaign, you will dare *feel* according to your actions.

*Sir S. (To Allworthy.)* You must have lived, then, to enjoy every thing domestic happiness, or public approbation, can bestow.

The just, and unsuborn'd, applause of man,  
Man's sweetest retribution!

*Major C.* Come, Mr. Moralist! I should think *here* was man's sweetest retribution. *(Pointing to Eliza.)*

*Allw.* I have existed, too, a sufficient time to be disgusted with the opposite and offensive doctrines of

of passive obedience and intemperate equality; to hear and see strange things, indeed!—but, thank God! I have not breathed long enough to outlive the loyalty—or independence—of my heart, or the laws and constitution of my country.

*Sir S.* God forbid any of us should live to see that day!

*Allw.* Yet nations, like individuals, can only preserve their happiness, by a moral and moderate conduct. Neither true patriotism, true virtue, true morality, true felicity, nor, perhaps, true love, will be found in violent extremes. There is an honourable and happy medium, in all—that golden mean, may you find; I *have* acquired it, though I never did form a system. You'll excuse me, Sir Sober.

*Sir S.* Yet nothing, I believe, is more difficult than to love with reason.

*Eliza.* Except, to reason with love.

*Sir S.* As to me, I have been, by turns, a wanderer, and a wanton; a moralist, and a misanthrope; a lounge, and a logician. I have eagerly sought happiness in frivolous follies, false love, and fashionable pursuits; in never-ceasing society, and reclusive retirement: but, after having seen various countries, the beauties of another hemisphere; the riches of earth, and the grandeur of the waters; after having equally run astray, in my antipathies and affections, all my desires are purified and sublimed, and all centre in objects worthy of love, honour, or adoration. My future days, I dedicate to rational society; to my friends; to you, my Eliza; to my King, to my country, and my Creator.

*Major C.* Well, my friend, what think you of the passions, now?



*Sir S.* Why, I think that avarice may be gratified, anger appeased, and ambition die of enjoyment, or disappointment; that the tear may swell, may fall, and be forgotten: but that love, all-powerful love, is the most amiable, active, durable, and generous of all the passions, which soften, agitate, or render mankind social, happy, or humane.

*Major C.* Suppose I were to remind you of your past speeches, on these subjects.

*Sir S.* You must be called to order; it is irregular to allude to a former debate—and show me a better standing rule for all parties. I confess myself an altered man; my systems, have vanished into air, “into thin air.” Man is a blind animal, and nothing so easy as to run into errors.

*Eliza.* Except, to find excuses for them, afterwards.

*Major C.* No, no; you must not take leave of your old friends thus coolly and cavalierly. You might have made a parody on a favourite speech of our favourite bard:

So farewell to the little good you've done me;  
Farewell, a long farewell, to all my plans;  
This is the state of man, to-day he spins forth  
The system's flimsy web, to-morrow blushes,  
And wounds the tender texture, still around him.  
The third day comes some fair, some blooming fair,  
And, when he thinks, good gudgeon man, full surely,  
His system is accomplish'd, breaks his plan,  
And down he falls, as I do—I have ventur'd,  
Like many a self-made sage, who projects forms,  
Recluse within his room, of wisdom high,  
But far beyond his reach; his tender web,  
At length breaks under him, and down he falls,  
From his ideal height, into the ways  
Of human frailty.—

(To

(To *Sir Sober*.) Come, repeat after me.

Vain sounds, vain systems, void of sense, I—break thee.—

*Eliza.* O! I insist; repeat it, repeat it. (*Sir Sober repeats.*)

Vain sounds, vain systems, void of sense, I—break thee.

I feel my heart new open'd. Oh! how mad  
Is that poor man who thinks himself divine.

There is, between that state, we would aspire to,

That sweet aspect of wisdom, gravely guis'd;

All faults and passions which dame Nature gives;

And, when he loves, he loves—like *Soberfides*—

Never to cease again!—

*Sir S.* Well, well—I am not the only person subject to change my plans; for, rejoiced am I to find the embarkation of your regiment is countermanded. You and Charlotte, are formed to enjoy happiness; my house, my heart—all I, *now*, have—shall be ever yours.

*Char.* Well do I know that—but see; (*showing a paper*;) the noble-hearted Eliza has, already, absolutely settled ten thousand pounds on us, for ever.

*Sir S. Major C. and Char.* (*All together.*) Generous, generous Eliza!

*Allw.* (*Embracing Eliza.*) Such an exalted soul, had your excellent and benevolent mother!

*Eliza.* God knows, I feel and acknowledge, that my best actions are but feeble imitations of her unrivalled virtues.—(*To Charlotte and Major Counterguard.*) May you, both, be as happy as I wish, and you deserve.

Enter RAGOT, with a letter, which he delivers to Charlotte.

*Char.* (*Opening the letter, and reading.*) “Mr. Double-

"Doubledeed,"—from an attorney—Heaven defend us from sin and sorrow!—"Mr. Doubledeed, "has the honour to inform Miss System, that her "distant relation, Mrs. Grimalkin, of Catterwaul "Court, in Yorkshire, expired on Friday last, "never having perfectly recovered the loss of her "favourite cat.—He annexes an abstract of her "will."—Well! I can't cry; yet, I believe, I ought not to laugh, even though I never did see Mrs. Grimalkin, in all my life.

*Eliza.* But, the will!

*Char. (Reading.)* "To be expended in coach-hire, cream, chickens, and choice viands, for "said Tabitha, a legacy of three thousand pounds. "The demise of said Tabitha proved, this is a "lapsed legacy. The interest of two thousand "pounds, in trust, for the proper use and benefit "of her brown spaniel, Snorer, during his natural life; and, in default of lawful heirs, to "revert to the residuary legatee.—To Jean, "François Ragot, one thousand pounds (Ragot "runs about rejoicing), as a reward for his fidelity "and attachment to his late master, a French "emigrant nobleman, when in distress, in London. (*All rejoice.*) [*Exit Ragot, singing.* "Miss Charlotte System, residuary legatee, will "have forty-five thousand eight hundred and "twenty-nine pounds, seven shillings, and three-pence, three per cent. consols. and the Cornish "copper-mine."

*Sir S. (To Major Counterguard,)* Why, Sir Minor Witting will call you the Copper Captain.

*Major C.* With all my heart; so as the vein of our copper-mine is not as shallow, and unproductive, as his vein of wit.

*Allw.* Come! Come! no snip-snap, now!—I hope

hope to wish you joy, soon, (*to Major Counterguard*) of a young Copper Captain, and your friend, here, of a little Systematic Philosopher; and a fond, foolish, old grandfather, shall I be, I dare say!

*Enter SIRLOIN, leading in RAGOT, with affected smiles, ogling and paying him compliments; the music playing, "The Roast Beef of Old England."*

*Sir S.* Why, we are all met here, with more than common dramatic confusion and contrivance—please to go and make love in the kitchen, or the cupboard.

*Ragot.* Oui Monsieur, as you please.

(*Sirloin sings the first line of "Love's a gentle, generous passion;" and Ragot, "Ah! si vous pouviez comprendre."*)

*Sirl.* And, I hope, Sir, when you are a parliament-man, you will have interest enough to get my Mr. Ragot a place.

*Sir S.* What! in the kitchen, or the Custom-house?

*Sirl.* O! Sir, any house you please—but a National Assembly-house, or a Pantheon.

*Sir S.* Yes, he shall have a place under Sancho Panza, in the Island of Baratania. He, shall be clerk of the kitchen, and you, chief beef-eater; or, (*to Ragot,*) what think you of being Sancho's first aide-de-camp, or private secretary?

*Sirl.* And me, Sir; I hope you will get me some post, that will suit my size and sex.

*Sir S.* Yes, and suit your merits too; you shall have—a whipping-post.

*Sirl.* Yes—when you get me to Dieppe.

*Rag.* Ay, to the *Diable*, rather than to Dieppe.

*Sirl.*



Sirl. "Come, come, my little private secretary, for the home department!" [*Exeunt Ragot and Sirloin (she singing, "Say little foolish, fluttering thing.") They meet, and laugh at, Mrs. ARCH Gossip, who enters finely equipped, like a bride. Her dress is, in the extreme, scanty, thin, tight, and fashionable. She has painted ears and elbows, preposterous protuberances, &c. She gives herself many airs.*

Eliza. Heyday! one would think you were to be one of my bridesmaids.

A. Gof. Maid, indeed!—Maid!—Ha! ha! ha!—But, Madam, I must desire you would make a fresh arrangement in your family; and, as to the emoluments of my office, you may give them to buy soup for the poor of the parish, or pay them, at the Bank, as my voluntary subscription.—Now shall I let out all the secret, at once? rush into the middle of things, as the poet says! Yes, I will—Know then, Madam, I am—your equal.

Eliza. Oh! if you talk of equality, the sooner you are gone the better.

A. Gof. Yes, your equal; your superior, in England, as well as—Spain. I expect you will leave your card of congratulation, in Grosvenor Square, for Donna Maria Matilda—for I am married to Signor Don Sanchez, Alphonse, Ramire, Francisque, Don Matador.

Eliza. How many Hidalgos are you married to?

A. Gof. How many!—That shows the ignorance of some people—why, a nobleman, in Spain, with one name, is as poor as a Pacha, in Turkey, with one wife. Don Matador, has been in London, some time, treating, as I only know, of a separate peace. Our negotiation, has been long pending, and we only

only waited for permission of his court, and a dispensation, from the Pope, to enable him to marry a Protestant. Oh! the sweet serenades, and courtly courthip of my *charge d'affair*!—Oh! such *projets* and *contreprojets*! (*Taking out a number of letters.*) Yes, "the undersigned Don." Not a day, an hour, that I did not receive his notes. He, then, pressed me to an ultimatum: and I preferred him—and well I might, indeed!—to Mr. Benjamin Butterfirkin, who, however, was an honest man; yet vulgar, withal; though he would have settled an hundred pounds a year on me—but I could not resist a preliminary treaty, with Don Matador, which has been signed, sealed, and—ratified:

Ambitious love, the softer sex can sway,  
And—

Here comes Don Matador, to fill up the couplet.

Major C. And the devil of a long, lamentable, Alexandrine, must it be, if half his break-tooth names are to be introduced. Such a task, would puzzle a Milton, and Shakespeare, too.

*Enter Don MATADOR, saluting the company, in the Spanish fashion.*

Don M. May you all, Ladies and Gentlemen, live a thousand years, &c. &c.

A. Gof. (*In triumph.*) Now, Madam, am I your equal, or not?—And Don Matador has settled upon me all his castles, at Madrid, and all his lands and flocks, in Andalusia.—Have you not, Signor?

Don M. Sr Signora, all, as I am a true Castilian—on my honour.

Major C. (*Looking steadfastly at him.*) And, pray, on whom have you settled your castles—in the air?

Don

*Don M.* Signor! *Major C.* (Attempting to lay hold of his ears, while *Don Matador* exclaims, "*Poco, poco.*") But, if I am right, this can be no offence, for you are as deficient in ears, as honesty—yes, "thou art the man."—Were not your ears nailed to the pillory, in the north of England, when you were an attorney? and did not lenity order your name to be struck off the roll, when justice would have ordered your head to be struck off your shoulders?—Did you not enlist in a regiment at Gibraltar, with the worst of views, that of corrupting the garrison from their duty? and did I not see you flogged, for that vain attempt, from Europa Point, to Windmill Hill; from thence, to South-port, and, then, to Water-port, and exported to Spain, with a halter round your neck?

*Don M.* Though this may be very true, it certainly is not very polite, thus to remind a man of his misfortunes, on the day of his nuptials.

*Eliza.* Donna Maria, I beg to congratulate you on your marriage.

*Char.* And I will postpone my congratulations, till I have the honour of calling on your Excellentissima, in Grosvenor Square; and, in the mean time, I hope to see your name among the list of fashion, presented at the drawing-room, and most graciously received—being introduced by that renowned Russian, *Princess Rusty-Fusty*—in a cog.

*A. Gof.* O Lord, Lord! Was it for this I sacrificed my state of innocence, my pug, my poets, and my five hundred pounds, too, which I have been saving these twenty years—Oh! how shall I poison him?

*Sir S.* With laurel water; and, if that is not strong

strong enough, persevere—and poison him with—your love.

*Major C.* What! can he plead possession?

*A. Gof.* Oh! yes!—oh! yes! he may plead possession, indeed! of every thing real, or personal.

*Don M.* Yes! all made sacred, and appropriated to my own service—*Tabooed*, as we say, in the Sandwich Islands: and *the undersigned* claims, as the basis of all future arrangements, the conquered guineas, the *uti possidetis*; they have, already, been incorporated with my ancient domains, and I know nothing I can do, but give security, on my estates in Andalusia, for, I fear, it is too late to expect the *status quo ante*—Ha, Mrs. Arch Gossip?

*A. Gof.* Oh! yes! oh! yes! you know it is, you wicked man!

*Major C.* Well, this fellow has impudence enough to be ambassador from Pandæmonium or—Paris—or chargé d'affaires from the devil—or the consulate, either.

*Don M.* Now, good night, ladies and gentlemen; for I mean to retire to the country, keep a pig, and live honestly—till all my money is gone.

*A. Gof.* Why, to you, Trappanti was an Aristides—Oh! that I had been safely warehoused with Mr. Benjamin Butterfirkin, in Botolph Lane.

*Eliza.* Now, you see what it is to prefer show to substance, and, eagerly, to enter into a treaty with those who are neither bound by laws human nor divine. Had you been true to John Bull, all would have been well. Though John has his foibles, and his faults, be assured he will not mend them by too close a connexion with Don Matador, or, Citizen *Meurtrier*, either.



*Enter Officers of Justice.*

*1st Officer.* Oh! ho! Mr. Ambassador; we have charges against you that would reach from hence to the Giralda, at Seville. *(They seize Don Matador.)*

*Don M. Poco!* *pero!* You'll rumple my neck-cloth.

*2d Officer.* We will furnish you with another—a hempen one.

*Eliza.* *(To Mrs. Arch Gossip.)* You must submit, then, I fear, to a partition treaty, for the undersigned seems to stand a good chance of a snug lodging in Cold Bath Fields, or of dancing a fandango with the aid of Jack Ketch, to the tune of the Rogue's March on the drop at Newgate.

*[Exeunt Officers, with Don Matador.]*

*A. Goss.* Oh! don't talk to me of cold baths, or vapour baths, either; for I am sure I am in the vapours, already. Oh! if I can but recover my five hundred pounds, and the affections of Mr. Benjamin Butterfiskin; I may, yet, live to grace a Lord Mayor's ball, or a side box, at the theatre in Wellclose Square.

*Sir S.* *(To Eliza.)* I may say, indeed, "I find my heart new opened;" and never was a man more fully convinced, than I am, of the absurdity of all fanciful systems, and all extremes—except the extreme of love.

*Char.* Well! you see what wit, sense, beauty, and beneficence, can do for a poor man.

*Major G.* And, look at old Sirloin, and see what impudence, self-interest, and a thousand pounds, can do for a poor man.

*Eliza.* I boast not of the perfections you attribute to me.

*Sir S.* Never did a man feel so much flattered, as I do, at this moment.

*Major C.* Yes, I do; but we will not quarrel about that, shall we, Charlotte?

*Char.* O! you flattering and flatter'd, gentlemen! but, no more compliments!

*Eliza.* Rather let us enjoy their honey while we can; for, after marriage, these gentlemen generally grow so rude and restiff, that it soon becomes *our* turn to flatter—and what, like a little refinement in the art, can keep these lords of the creation in tolerable temper?

*Char.* Indeed, it is, sometimes, with the best and proudest of them, more efficacious than reason, ranting, drubbing, or dragooning. O flattery! flattery!

*Eliza.* Yes—

Wrapt in self-confidence, see man rejoice,  
Yet vain resist the music of her voice:  
In vain his boasted wisdom, and in vain,  
Bind flattery's subtle form with reason's chain.  
Chasten'd, or chas'd, again that form intrudes;  
Her force, man's force; her art, man's art, eludes.  
With soften'd features, she, with covert guile,  
Creeps to his heart, and wins him with—a smile.  
Let judgment temper but her warbled lay,  
Statesmen, and heroes, Kings themselves obey.  
Some trembling note, some favour'd passion meets,  
That trembling note, that favour'd passion greets:  
Each has *some* tender, *some* unguarded part;  
Touch but the string, it vibrates to the heart:  
Not less divine than music of the spheres,  
When first attemper'd to celestial ears—  
Sooth'd by *her* voice, the sterner passions die,  
And all the soul of man is harmony.

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

## EPILOGUE.

*To be spoken, in the Character of Sir SOBER SYSTEM.*

**'T**IS done, in holy wedlock we're united,  
The prayers are over, and the priest required.  
Heav'n! what a change!—and yet, methinks, 't is so  
From Palace Yard, to Paternoster Row.  
Yes, far as pole to pole, let mortals rove,  
There Hymen sanctifies the torch of love—  
Nay view, and viewing, feel the heart's applause,  
Our Sovereign, subject to his free-form'd laws;  
Nay, without envy, see him, if you can,  
Well-pleas'd, unite the monarch and the man;  
Imbosom'd, with his blooming offspring round,  
By love, by law, in chains connubial bound—  
Princes, and Peers, and ministers of state,  
Sooner, or later, these said chains await;  
Sir Sober's fortune, and Sir Sober's fate.—  
Our conquerors, conquer'd, here, we bring to view,  
St. Vincent, Duncan—and our Nelson too;  
All, all, true Benedicks—though all true blue—  
And Howe—Oh! lov'd, renown'd, respected name!  
Brave Howe!—immortal in the lists of fame;  
Who now lies number'd with the patriot dead,  
With GRACE and VIRTUE shar'd the nuptial bed—  
The Soldier too, alive to female charms,  
An humble parley beats—and grounds his arms—

See'n



See'st thou the cit?---Suppose the city knight,  
 Without her---*Ladyship*---in wholesome plight,  
 Jumble along, close pack'd, in chaise and one---  
 Westward---in search of fashion---and of---fun---  
 The lawyer too, by powerful love engross'd,  
 Lays by his parchments, post, and demi-post---  
 Deeds, and deed-polls, delays, and, wily, ventures  
 To draw, with cautious hand, his *own* indentures---  
 The grave divine, at risk of care and strife;  
 His rib selects, and---"cleaves unto his wife"  
 Dockets and bales arrang'd, safe landed more,  
 His credit firm, of cash a plenteous store,  
 A sleeping partner in his house, for life,  
 The merchant, adds---that tally, call'd---a wife---  
 The thrifty tradesman, he must have his bride,  
 Six days to grace his shop---the seventh---his side,  
 Some fond, bedizen'd fair---in Holborn first espied---  
 Mechanics, farmers---cottager the same,  
 Lives, in his straw-thatch'd hut, and---loves his dame---  
 With her his labour, her his homely fare,  
 Rejoic'd, "in sickness and in health," to share---  
 A tight, trim sail, in colours drest'd, *Jack* spies,  
 Soon brings her too; and---(having d---d his eyes)  
 "What ho! my lads, what cheer!" *Jack* cries, "what  
 cheer!"  
 "Come, moor with me---I'll drop my privateer;  
 "Through life's rough seas, close knotted, splic'd to-  
 gether,  
 "We'll sail, in spite of adverse winds and weather.  
 "Come, Mr. Parlon, d---n you, where's your book?  
 "Launch it---and anchor us in love's snug nook;---  
 "Stick to your convoy close, by night and day,  
*Jack* says,---and takes, in tow, his prize away---  
 In

In love, the wise philosopher's a man,  
 "Resolves and re-resolves," and---breaks his plan---  
 We doubt, deny, resist, postpone our hour,  
 But all *once* feel the sex's sacred pow'r---  
 To soften, sopth, seduce, refine, their part;  
 Reform mankind, and humanize the heart---  
 The saint, the savage, sage, all quit the field,  
 Most blest, when baffled, if to---them---they yield.

THE END.

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